

SOCCER

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Roos Ready for First Test



Socceroo skipper Paul Okon, Australian coach Frank Farina and Roo 'keeper Mark Schwarzer shown answering questions at the Marriott Hotel in Essex, England.

By Mark Stavroulakis

The wait is finally over, the eagerly anticipated match between the Socceroos and England is finally at our doorsteps and already the guns have been blazing in the Australian corner.

Socceroo coach Frank Farina flew out of Sydney a confident man last week bound for the clash that has been billed as the first big test for his squad boosting three new inclusions since their last match in Montevideo.

A match all Australians would love to forget, Farina's men were outclassed by a classy Uruguayan side that ended up making last year's World Cup in Korea/Japan.

Being in hibernation for more than 15-months, the Socceroos will take the field with a new breed of players who will be gunning for that elusive direct qualification spot given to Oceania in Germany 2006.

The last time these two national sides met was back in June '91 when the likes of Gary Lineker, Stuart Pearce and David

Platt toured Sydney in a one-off match that ended in the Lions favour one-nil.

On paper the Australian squad certainly looks the goods however the dilemma of whether Leeds United ace Harry Kewell will take the field on Thursday remains to be seen.

The 24-year-old did not feature in Leeds United's one-nil victory over strugglers West Ham last week that ended the club's four match losing streak due to a tight hamstring.

Kewell has not featured in coach Terry Venables' squad since February 1st and has insisted that 'the jewel' will not be available for selection.

"It's a club rule where if they're not fit on the Saturday they don't play international football," Venables said on the club's official website. "It's always going to be a difficult one, especially for Australia because Harry rarely gets to play for them, but we had to see how they go."

However in latest developments the Smithfield born star has stated that he would join his team-members and will go

through a medical check-up to see whether or not he is fit to play against the English.

Farina stated at a London Press conference that Kewell will undergo an intensive medical test before deciding whether to play the under-utilised Socceroo star.

"Our physio Les Gelis knows the Leeds physio well and he's in the process of having a discussion with him. Until we know a bit more information, there's no point speculating. We'll have to wait and see."

Having only represented Australia 13 times at international level, Kewell is no doubt an important ingredient in the Socceroo squad and close sources have stated that he is doing everything in order to get onto the pitch this coming Thursday.

The Australian camp being led by skipper Paul Okon have been busily preparing for the match at the side's headquarters in Essex where Farina has pitted a number of formations for the clash against Sven Goran Eriksson's men.

'Attack at all ends' has been the obvious theme at the national team's training sessions with the likes of Mark Viduka, John

Aloisi, Josip Skoko and Brett Emerton gaining the green light in pressuring the English defence.

Meanwhile in the other corner, the Australian's will face a new look Poms side labeled by Sven as a 'vision of the future' handing a number of youngsters debuts for the English squad.

Wayne Rooney, Jermaine Jenas, Sean Davis, James Beattie, Paul Robinson, Francis Jeffers, Matthew Upson, Scott Parker and Paul Konchesky all gained call-ups from Eriksson and could be used for the entire second half as a more 'experienced' line-up will be used during the first.

"I know it might be a problem for the public and maybe for the FA with TV money but I'm sure you'll see a very interesting team for the future in the second-half."

I hope the public will appreciate it and I think that way is better than playing a second team whom everyone knows," Sven stated to the English press.

Familiar faces such as skipper David Beckham, Michael Owen, Sol Campbell

and Paul Scholes will make the side but will only be used for half of the match.

"If I can have the best players for 45 minutes, that's good enough for me as I think it's wrong to ask any more of them," Eriksson said.

Like Farina, Sven faced similar headaches from rival Premier League clubs such as Arsenal and Manchester United in choosing their best players for the big clash at Upton Park.

Managers Sir Alex Ferguson and Arsene Wenger claimed that their players were facing a number of matches in the coming month and wanted to avoid the risk of losing their high profile stars to injury.

Mid-last week the former Lazio boss threatened to quit the England post if he did not have a full-strength squad however injuries and suspensions to key players such as Steven Gerrard, Wayne Bridge, Dave Seaman, Jonathon Woodgate, Emile Heskey and Alan Smith have reprimanded him from selecting a full string line-up.

(More info on the big clash turn to page 8)

DOUMANIS STEALS POINTS WITH LATE EQUALISER

By Daniel Kuziow

Former Olympic Sharks player Anthony Doumanis returned to wreak misery on his former team as his late goal robbed the Olympic Sharks of a crucial victory in their derby match with Sydney United.

With United surging forward Dave Barrett swung one of his impeccable crosses from the right for Sean Babic to head firmly goalwards where Clint Bolton parried the ball. But Doumanis pounced to hook the ball into the net.

The Sharks however took the lead through the combination of Ante Milicic and Tom Pondeljak.

On 37 minutes, Pondeljak chased the ball on the right to the goal line and slipped his pass through a group of defenders for the waiting Milicic to side foot into the net.

But United clawed their way back into the match and were duly rewarded for their efforts when Doumanis stole in to score.

In the last of the Sunday games, the Parramatta Power came away from

Ballymore Stadium with a humiliating three-nil loss recorded against their name.

Defender John McKain scored a header after 40 minutes with their second scored only a minute into the second half from Anthony Roche who tapped in from close range.

Tahitian international Felix Tagawa, making his first appearance for the Strikers and rounded out the scoring with a debut goal just after the hour mark.

For a more indepth review of Round 21 turn to pages 6-7.



**A.P.I.A.-
Leichhardt Tigers
at Rome's
Olympic Stadium**

*Special Report from
Italy page 17*

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BY DANIEL KUZIW

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Australian winger Harry Kewell looks set to remain at Leeds despite the recent sale at the club.

The departures this season of Rio Ferdinand, Jonathan Woodgate, Lee Bowyer, Robbie Fowler, Olivier Dacourt and Robbie Keane had thrown into doubt the futures of the likes of Kewell and Alan Smith.

But, according to his agent Alex Black, Smith is close to signing a new three-and-a-half year deal with the club he has supported since he was a boy.



Harry Kewell: Looks set to remain at Leeds despite the recent sale at the club.

Kewell, who has another 18 months to run on his present contract, is poised to follow suit as agent Bernie Mandic has dismissed suggestions he wants out given the turmoil at the club.

"Harry is not looking to move anywhere," said Mandic of Kewell, who is believed to be one of the highest-paid players at Leeds on more than £40,000-per-week.

"What has happened [at Leeds] is not something I am concerned about and Harry has not voiced his concerns.

"As a team unit, everything is fine there and I have not heard anything to the contrary. The situation is between Peter [Ridsdale] and Terry [Venables].

"Harry still wants to stay at Leeds. He is having a very good season there so why would he want to leave?

"And contrary to some reports Leeds wanted to sell him, they

have never indicated that to me nor to Harry."

★★★★

UEFA report that Yugoslavia have agreed to play a friendly international against Australia on 28 March in Krusevac as a final preparation for their crucial UEFA EURO 200 Group 9 qualifier against Wales on 2 April.

"I wanted the team to face a tough opponent before the Wales game and that's what I have got," said Yugoslavia coach Dejan Savicevic. "Australia will come with their best players and they play in a similar style to our EURO 2004 opponents," he added.

★★★★

In the wake of the latest episode surrounding Mark Bosnich, Chelsea chairman Ken Bates has described the affair as "a tragedy".

The Australian goalkeeper was sacked by the Blues for testing positive for cocaine. The Premier League's tribunal has backed Chelsea's decision to terminate his contract.

The future of the former Aston Villa and Manchester United star is very much in doubt after his fall from grace.

Bates told the Evening Standard: "This whole case is a tragedy from everyone's point of view and so unnecessary. At the end of the day, Mark is in control of his own body and how he behaves."

★★★★

Birmingham winger Stan Lazaridis said Leeds wanted to sign him in the transfer window — but he is willing to pledge his future to Blues.

Lazaridis told Birmingham's official website: "I am happy to be at this club but the issue went further than that because I am looking at my career and want to stay in England for another couple of years.

"There was an opportunity to go to Leeds who are a big club and I have played under Terry Venables before.

"So the whole thing was fitting but, to be honest, if Birmingham decide at the end of the season that they want me to stay then there isn't an issue.

"It is only if they are going to release me then it would be a good move for me.

"Obviously the transfer window is closed now but at that time, they were trying to do a swap deal with me and Michael Duberry."



Stan Lazaridis: Received a very tempting offer by Leeds United.

★★★★

In the lead up to the much-anticipated Socceroos v England showdown, Frank Farina has announced Paul Okon as captain for that match.

"For this game Paul Okon will still captain Australia, we'll see what happens after that," he told AAP.

Farina also said his match plans would not alter much from the last time he had a full squad together - 14 months ago in the World Cup qualifying loss to Uruguay.

"We're not going to change too much, we don't have enough time with the players but the squad that we've got has been together a while, there's few new faces, but we'll be going along with the same plan we have in the past," Farina said.

Meanwhile England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson said he was expecting the Australians to provide a tough physical clash and feared Kewell's partnership with another of Leeds' Australians, striker Mark Viduka.



Paul Okon: Named as Socceroos captain for the upcoming match against England.

"I think they will play very aggressive and they will work very hard," Eriksson said.

"Up front with Kewell and Viduka I think they will be very dangerous."

★★★★

Leeds United striker Mark Viduka has lost his appeal against his sending off against

Gillingham and is now suspended for three matches.

The former Celtic hit man was given his marching orders for a deliberate elbow on Gills player-manager Andy Hessenthaler on January 25.



Mark Viduka: Has lost his appeal and now faces a three game ban.

The 27-year-old went some way to making amends for his red card by scoring United's opening goal in the replay against the First Division outfit on Tuesday. Viduka will now miss United's upcoming matches against West Ham and Newcastle United at Elland Road and the next round of the FA Cup.

★★★★

Harry Kewell was at the centre of a club versus country collision last night as Leeds United boss Terry Venables threatened to yank him from the Australian.

Australia's most valuable player is battling a hamstring injury and Leeds insist they will not release him to face the Three

Lions if he fails to face up against West Ham United in the weekend's premier League match.

"If Harry misses out on Saturday. It's more or less a rule for most clubs that he shouldn't play for his country either because he's not fit," said Venables to correspondents in London

"It's touch and go for Harry. He really wants to play for Australia against England but if he's not up to it he won't. It's as simple as that."

"I'm not normally somebody who stands in the way of players representing their countries," Venables said.

"I never have in the past and always released Paul Gascoigne and Gary Lineker when I was at Tottenham and I've happily released several players for Ireland and England next week.

"But this is a fitness issue and right now we are worried about Harry."



Terry Venables: The Leeds United manager may not release Harry Kewell to play for the Socceroos.

MORI RE-SIGNS

Perth Glory has resigned striker Damian Mori to a three-year deal.

The 32-year-old, who tops the NSL goal scorers list this season with 14 goals along with Newcastle's Joel Griffiths, will extend his stay to 2006 having joined the Glory from Adelaide City in 2000.

Perth coach Mitch d'Avray told AAP he was more than happy to have the services of the NSL's leading all-time scorer.

"For me, he is the best striker in the league, other people might disagree, but you can't argue with his record," d'Avray said.

Mori will have to wait until Sunday week for a chance to celebrate the new deal with a 200th career goal as the Glory have a bye this weekend.

Mori, a veteran of 372 games, having played for South Melbourne and the Knights as well as Adelaide and Perth, said he believed his age didn't make him any less appealing for the Glory.

"It is not how old you are, it is if you are good enough.

Either you can do the job or not do the job," he said.

It was a positive finish to a tough week for Perth, after it was stripped of three premiership points for playing an unregistered player.



Damian Mori: Has signed for a further three years at the Perth Glory.

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BOSNICH APPEAL FAILS BUT GAINS SOCCEROO INVITE

Goalkeeper Mark Bosnich has lost his case against unfair dismissal from Chelsea.

The Australian, who has been suffering from depression, told a Premier League tribunal that Chelsea acted improperly in the way in which they dismissed him following his positive drugs test for cocaine in November last year.

But an FA Premier League statement, released to the Press Association tonight, read: "In the matter of the appeal from Mark Bosnich against the notice to terminate his contract issued by Chelsea FC, the board of the Premier League have found in favour of the club."

The statement continued: "Mark Bosnich has the right to appeal against this decision to the Football League appeals committee within seven days. Any appeal must be heard within 14 days of receiving the request."

Bosnich, who reportedly claimed he failed the drugs test only because a drink had been spiked without his knowledge, was initially suspended without pay by Chelsea before the club then issued a 14-day notice period for his contract to be terminated.

Chelsea insisted Bosnich had breached the terms of his employment under Premier League rules and they could have been liable for at least his back pay - more than £300,000 (\$A840,000) - if they lose the case.

The hearing began last Thursday and concluded the next day at the Premier League's London headquarters.

The three-man tribunal, consisting of Premier League chairman Dave Richards, secretary Mike Foster and solicitor Peter McCormack, considered their judgment over the weekend before informing both parties of their decision.

Bosnich still faces a Football Association disciplinary hearing in to his positive drugs test and has vowed to fight to prove his innocence at a personal hearing.

Meanwhile Soccer Australia (SA) has thrown Mark Bosnich an olive branch by inviting him to join the national team squad when they gather in London for the friendly international against England.

"From day one Soccer Australia has privately offered any assistance possible to Mark's representatives," a Soccer Australia spokesman told *The Daily Telegraph*.

"Now if he wants to join the boys for dinner or come to the match at Upton Park, Frank Farina and Soccer Australia would welcome him with open arms."

Bosnich's Sydney-based agent Leo Karis confirmed SA's offer.

"Throughout the whole affair, SA have been very supportive of Mark, which in itself is very positive," he said.

"I'll make sure Mark gets the invite."



Former Socceroo Mark Bosnich has lost his case against unfair dismissal from Chelsea but has been given an invite to join the Socceroos.

Socceroos eye London

The Socceroos may base themselves in London in future in order to attract more frequent international competition.

Soccer Australia Chairman Remo Nogarotto is to hold meetings with the English Football Association and London-based Premiership clubs Chelsea, Arsenal, Tottenham and West Ham about the possibility of playing 'home' matches in the England capital.

Apart from being able to hold regular clashes with the powers of world football, being in control of the matches would also allow the Australian governing body to control the gate takings, and schedule the games at times that would suit its television partner.

"Having a London home would give us the capacity to generate revenue and, importantly, allow us to control kickoff times," Nogarotto told the *Herald Sun*.

"Kicking off at midday in London allows us to beam it back to Australia at

9pm rather than 3am, which obviously adds value for our media partner."

"An Italian side's not going to travel for 24 hours to get to the other side of the world in the middle of their domestic club competition," Nogarotto added in a report on the ABC Sport website.

"But they may play you in London on a Wednesday night. So the prospects are mouth-watering. There's a lot more opportunity if you're prepared to accept that you've got to fit into that European and UK calendar."

"To play one of these internationals in Europe and the UK we're looking at a net loss of somewhere between \$A100,000 and \$A200,000. We've got to turn a net loss into a net profit and the only way we can do that is to control the gate."

"And the only way you control the gate is if a game in London is in fact your home game."

Another bonus would be the fact that as

most of the Socceroos, best players are based in Europe, they would therefore be available more often, whereas when games are played in Australia their clubs are reluctant to grant releases.



Soccer Australia chairman Remo Nogarotto.

SOCCER AUSTRALIA APPOINTS NEW BOARD DIRECTOR

Soccer Australia last week announced the appointment of Walter Bugno as an independent Director to the Board of Soccer Australia.

Walter Bugno, the current President, Asia-Pacific of Campbells and Arnotts, joins the Board with a solid background in the commercial sector within Australia.

Soccer Australia Chairman Remo Nogarotto was very pleased with the Board's appointment of Mr Bugno, highlighting his strong corporate pedigree in the Australian business community and personal love of the world game.

"Walter Bugno brings strong corporate credentials, a new strategic skill-set and valued commercial credibility to the Board of Soccer Australia, a set of credentials that are interwoven with his long-standing passion for this beautiful game of ours," said Chairman Remo Nogarotto.

Mr Bugno, who has been a life-long passionate soccer follower, was delighted and

surprised by the offer of the Soccer Australia Board to invite him to participate in guiding soccer during this critical renaissance.

"I have always said that the sport of soccer has never fully delivered on its true potential in this country, I am excited and energised at being given this opportunity of making a decisive and measurable contribution to the achievement of that potential," said Walter Bugno.

"For any organisation, success is founded upon having a solid strategic platform that is coupled with excellent execution, backed by a leadership team that is visionary, disciplined and united in its desire to achieve the best results for the organisation."

"The recent decision from FIFA, the reshaping of the Board and the early announcements of support from Qantas and adidas, gives Soccer Australia a unique opportunity to finally put in place those foundations upon

which future success can be built."

The Board of directors for Soccer Australia are Remo Nogarotto (Chairman), Les

Avory (Deputy Chairman), Paul Afkos, Dominic Galati, Robert Sestan, Bill Walker and Walter Bugno.



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Glory stripped of points

Perth Glory has been docked three points and fined \$5,000 for using an unregistered player against Parramatta Power in Round 1 of the National Soccer League.

The decision to strip Perth of the points and award the game to Parramatta as a 3-0 win was made at an NSL disciplinary tribunal in Sydney last Tuesday night.

The West Australian club claims that German import Andre Gumprecht was registered for the opening game of the season, which the Glory won 2-0.

However, a NSL statement confirmed otherwise.

"On the evidence before it, the tribunal found Perth Glory in breach of regulation 16.13 in playing an unregistered player - Andre Gumprecht."

The Glory have been given five business days in which to appeal the decision in writing although this appears unlikely.

"In sport you do not always agree with the referee's decision but you have to get on with the game," said Perth Chief Executive Officer Jeff Dennis in a press statement.

"It is a desperately disappointing way to lose three points that the players worked so hard to win. It will be sad if this matter influences the final standings.



"I would reiterate that Perth Glory has never had a transgression and given the depth of our squad had no reason to transgress in round one.

"The club maintains that the issuing of a registration number by the governing body would appear to mean a player is registered but soccer has had enough internal bickering over the years and in the interests of the game as a whole we will accept the tribunal decision."

An independent three-man tribunal in Sydney took about three hours to hear the case and make its decision.

The decision to dock the Glory three points has yet again twisted things around on the NSL ladder.

The Olympic Sharks will benefit from this as the race is on yet again for the Minor Premiership while the Power continue to move up the ladder following their recent run of good results.

It will become more evident come Round 23 when the Glory host the Sharks in a match which could decide the Minor Premier.

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Welcomes Junior players of all ages to our grading trials for the 2003 season in competitions run by the Canterbury District Soccer Football Association.

Tuesday 4th February 2003 and every Tuesday thereafter until the teams are selected - Under 6, Under 7, Under 8 and Under 9, starting from 6.00pm.

Wednesday 5th February 2003 and every Wednesday thereafter until the teams are selected Under 10, Under 11 and Under 12, starting from 6.00pm.

Thursday 6th February 2003 and every Thursday thereafter until the teams are selected - Under 13, Under 14, Under 15 and Under 16, starting from 6.00pm.

All sessions will be held at Beaman Park, Flinders Road, Earlwood and will be under the supervision of our Director of Coaching, Mr George Lazarou.

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John Aligianis on 9790 6998 during business hours

WORLD

Spanish Primera Liga

Real Sociedad's inconsistency continued on Sunday afternoon as they were held to a goalless draw by lowly Espanyol.

The league leaders have been under constant pressure from an in-form Real Madrid side finally showing their title credentials and Raynald Denoueix's men had the perfect opportunity to re-establish a four-point lead at the top.

But Darko Kovacevic and Tayfur Korkmaz both squandered chances for the hosts and the visitors will be happy with a point gained.

Fellow championship hopefuls Valencia needed an 85th-minute equaliser to earn a 1-1 draw at basement club Recreativo Huelva.

Raul Molina gave the hosts a surprise lead in the 32nd minute as the defending champions struggled to find their feet.

But Aurelio found the target with a sweetly-struck free-kick to keep third-placed Valencia five points behind the leaders.

Celta Vigo boosted their Champions League

qualification hopes with a 2-0 victory against Mallorca.

Mallorca looked lively until Edu struck in the 55th and 64th minutes to end the visitors' brave challenge.

Deportivo La Coruna fought back from a goal down to earn a 1-1 home draw against Osasuna.

Inaki Munoz silenced the home crowd when he found the target a minute after the restart, but Dutch striker Roy Makaay earned his side a share of the

spoils in the 65th minute.

Rayo Vallecano claimed a 2-1 victory over Malaga to help their battle to avoid the drop.

Miguel Angel Michel opened the scoring for Malaga early in the game and Roberto Peragon appeared to have given the hosts the win when he struck in the 80th minute.

But Uruguayan international Dario Silva pulled one back five minutes later to create a tense finale for Rayo.

Racing Santander eased their relegation worries with a 2-0 victory over mid-table Alaves.

Mehdi Nafti fired the hosts ahead in the 25th minute before Mario Regueiro sealed the points three minutes from time.

On Saturday, Real Madrid rediscovered their winning touch as they brushed aside the challenge of fellow title contenders Real Betis in the Bernabeu.

After three consecutive Primera Liga draws a four goal haul against the side placed fifth in the league restored the momentum to Madrid's title challenge.

Goals from Raul, Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo crushed a spirited Real Betis who had more than matched the home side in the first half, and taken the lead through Fernando.

In the day's only other game in La Liga, Villarreal achieved back-to-back wins with a victory over mid-table rivals Valladolid.

Valladolid slipped below their conquerors in the table, paying the full price for Jorge Lopez's 23rd-minute penalty strike.

But then the decisive moments came, as Valladolid goalkeeper Albano Bizzarri brought Martin Palermo down in the penalty area as he was

Villarreal 1 - 0 Valladolid, Real Madrid 4 - 1 Real Betis, Deportivo La Coruna 1 - 1 Osasuna, Mallorca 0 - 2 Celta de Vigo, Racing Santander 2 - 0 Deportivo Alaves, Rayo Vallecano 2 - 1 Malaga, Real Sociedad 0 - 0 Espanyol, Recreativo Huelva 1 - 1 Valencia, Sevilla 1 - 1 Atletico Madrid, Barcelona 2 - 2 Athletic Bilbao.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Sociedad	21	12	8	1	36	24	44
Real Madrid	21	11	9	1	46	22	42
Valencia	21	11	6	4	34	17	39
D Coruna	21	10	6	5	30	25	36
Real Betis	21	9	6	6	32	28	33
Celta Vigo	21	10	3	8	24	19	33
Atletico Madrid	21	7	8	6	33	27	29
Villarreal	21	7	7	7	22	23	28
Malaga	21	6	9	6	28	26	27
Mallorca	21	8	3	10	24	35	27
Valladolid	21	8	3	10	21	24	27
Sevilla	21	6	8	7	17	16	26
Athletic Bilbao	21	7	5	9	32	37	26
CD Alaves	21	6	7	8	26	33	25
Barcelona	21	6	6	9	29	30	24
Osasuna	21	6	6	9	23	27	24
Racing Santander	21	7	2	12	24	29	23
Espanyol	21	6	4	11	24	31	22
Rayo Vallecano	21	6	4	11	22	30	22
Recreativo Huelva	21	3	6	12	17	41	15



Raul scored Real Madrid's equaliser in their 4-1 win over Real Betis.

running away from the goal.

Jorge Lopez planted the resulting penalty in the right-hand side of the goal.

Defensive frailties returned to haunt new coach Radomir Antic's Barcelona side as they surrendered a two-goal lead to finish all square with Athletic Bilbao.

The Azulgrana stormed into a two-goal lead with strikes from Javier Saviola and Marc Overmars, but they were undone during a 10-minute spell at the start of the second-half. Joseva Ezquerro and Francisco Yeste grabbed the goals for the visitors.

SPANISH FIXTURES SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2003

Barcelona v Athletic
Deportivo v Osasuna
Mallorca v Celta
R.Vallecano v Malaga
R.Sociedad v Espanyol
Sevilla v At.Madrid
Villarreal v Valladolid
Rec de Huelva v Valencia
Racing v Alaves
R.Madrid v Betis

German Bundesliga

Bayern Munich's seemingly unstoppable charge towards the Bundesliga title faltered slightly as they conceded a last minute equaliser to Hamburg on Sunday.

Claudio Pizarro's 11th-minute goal put Bayern ahead and as time ticked away the Bavarian giants looked likely to open up a 10-point lead over Borussia Dortmund, who lost 1-0 to Stuttgart.

But Japanese star Naohiro Takahara levelled for Hamburg in the 90th minute to ensure Bayern's lead was extended to just eight points - still a formidable safety margin for Ottmar Hitzfeld's team.

Second-placed Borussia Dortmund lost 1-0 to Stuttgart in the day's other game.

The reigning champions went behind in the 75th minute to a Zvonimir Soldo effort and, with defeat looming, they had Brazilian striker Marcio Amoroso sent off for his second bookable offence in the last minute.

Bayer Leverkusen suffered another torrid setback on

Saturday to put the position of coach Klaus Toppmoller under serious threat.

They were beaten 2-1 at Bochum and consequently are now just three points off the foot of the Bundesliga.

Toppmoller was one of the darlings of German football just a season ago but yet another league defeat - Leverkusen's 10th in 20 matches this season - has left the coach on very thin ice.

Leverkusen, who finished runners-up in the Bundesliga, the German cup and the Champions League last year, have endured an almighty struggle in this campaign. They crashed to defeat at Bochum with substitute Vahid Hashemian of Iran scoring the winner, his second



VfL Bochum's goalkeeper Rein van Duijnhoven under pressure from Diego Placente of Bayer Leverkusen.

goal of the game, six minutes from time.

Marko Babic had scored a 78th-minute equaliser for Leverkusen, who are fourth from bottom - just one point above the drop zone - but they could not hang on for a point.

Nearer the top of the Bundesliga, Werder Bremen missed the chance to move into second place following a 2-1 home defeat by improving 1860 Munich.

Daniel Borimirov's second goal of the season eight minutes from time completed 1860's fightback after Benjamin Lauth had earlier equalised Ivan Klasnic's first-half goal.

Hertha Berlin dealt a blow to Schalke's hopes of a Champions League place by inflicting their first defeat in seven games with a 4-2 home success.

It was a wretched afternoon for Schalke midfielder Gustavo Varela, who scored Hertha's third before being sent off in the 60th minute for his second bookable offence.

Michael Preetz, Alex Alves and Marcelinho were the home side's other scorers, while Emile Mpenza and Nils Oude Kamphuis scored at the right end for Schalke.

Kaiserslautern admit that their Bundesliga survival depends on home form and they took the first tentative steps towards safety with a 2-0 home win against Borussia Monchengladbach.

Goals from Aleksander Knavs and Miroslav Klose gave Eric Gerets' team their first victory of the year and will instil some belief that they can avoid relegation.

Wolfsburg eased the pressure on their manager Wolfgang Wolf by also claiming a 2-0 win over Arminia Bielefeld. Goals by Stefan Schnoor in the 25th minute and Tomislav Maric six minutes after half-time sent the home fans away happy.

Mohammadou Idrissou did his bit to ease Hannover's relegation worries by putting a hat-trick past their fellow strugglers Nurnberg.

Idrissou stunned the visitors by firing his side three up by the 24th minute.

Carlos Junior hit back for Nurnberg in the 32nd minute and Sasa Ciric added a second in the 53rd minute before he was sent off for foul and abusive language.

Daniel Stefuli added a fourth to seal Hannover's victory in the 71st minute.

Finally, Hansa Rostock had striker Rade Prica sent off in the closing minutes as they were held to a goalless draw by basement club Energie Cottbus.

Bochum 2 - 1 Bayer Leverkusen, Hannover 4 - 2 Nurnberg, Hansa Rostock 0 - 0 Energie Cottbus, Hertha BSC 4 - 2 Schalke, Kaiserslautern 2 - 0 Monchengladbach, Werder Bremen 1 - 2 Munich 1860, Wolfsburg 2 - 0 Arminia Bielefeld, Bayern Munich 1 - 1 Hamburger SV, Stuttgart 1 - 0 Borussia Dortmund.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	20	13	5	2	40	15	44
Borussia Dortmund	20	10	6	4	31	16	36
VfB Stuttgart	20	10	6	4	33	24	36
Werder Bremen	20	10	4	6	37	32	34
Schalke	20	8	8	4	27	21	32
1860 Munich	20	9	4	7	31	27	31
Hamburg	20	8	6	6	25	26	30
VfL Bochum	20	8	5	7	36	32	29
Hertha Berlin	20	8	5	7	26	25	29
Wolfsburg	19	8	2	9	23	24	26
Hansa Rostock	20	6	6	8	22	24	24
Arminia Bielefeld	20	6	6	8	23	28	24
Hannover 96	20	6	5	9	29	37	23
Nurnberg	20	6	3	11	26	34	21
Bayer Leverkusen	20	5	5	10	25	34	20
Borussia M'gladbach	19	5	4	10	20	24	19
FC Kaiserslautern	20	4	5	11	22	32	17
Cottbus	20	4	5	11	18	39	17

FIXTURES Sunday 16, February 2003

M'gladbach v Hertha
Hamburger SV v Wolfsburg
1860 München v B.München
Nürnberg v Werder Bremen
Cottbus v Hannover
Leverkusen v Hansa Rostock
Dortmund v Bochum
Schalke v Stuttgart
Bielefeld v Kaiserslautern

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR WATTS

By Peter Damalas

The rise and rise of Northern Spirit into playoff contention has once again illustrated the closeness of the 2002-2003 National Soccer League season.

Touted as wooden spoon candidates only four weeks ago, the Spirit have become the club most likely to pounce on any slip up from one of the teams currently in the top six.

Wins against fellow strugglers Sydney United and Marconi Stallions, not to mention the 2-1 success over high flying Parramatta Power in a deferred match on Wednesday night, has propelled the team up the ladder and given supporters an excellent reason to return to North Sydney Oval.

Coached by Scotsman, Lawrie McKinna, in his first season at the helm of an NSL club, the Spirit have usurped John Kosmina's Brisbane as the form team of the competition in the blink of an eye.

However, key defender Julian Watts, stated that recent results have not necessarily been influenced by a turnaround in the players' form.

"At times this season we have played quite well. We've been unlucky and have been undone by a couple of daft goals. I'd say that we have deserved two or three losses, but most of the time our performance has not been too bad.

Unfortunately it seems the local press have wanted us to do badly" he said. With four players representing Australia and New Zealand at under 20s level in World Youth Championship qualifiers in December, the club were allowed to



Julian Watts: Has played a commanding role in Spirit's backline this season.

defer three matches.

According to the Englishman, the time off allowed the team to reflect on their position and build a challenge for the finals.

"We changed over to 4-4-2, and the players are more suited to this system. Lawrie has been willing to push the younger players, and they have done brilliantly. Alex Wilkinson is versatile and has played everywhere in defence. Jonathan Richter is a tricky little winger, Matt Osman is an intelligent player. People don't even realise that Adam Kwasnik is a very young man," said Watts.

With his extensive knowledge of the English game, having played for Rotherham United, Sheffield Wednesday, Leicester City, Bristol City and Luton Town, Julian Watts remains an interested observer in the lead up to the England - Australia friendly on Thursday morning eastern standard time.

"Everyone's wondering if Sven Goran Eriksson is going to select his full strength squad. I think James Beattie from Southampton might get a role at some stage. It's going to be a good game for a lot of reasons. For Australia, it offers a new start after the disappointment of not qualifying for the World Cup, and with Oceania qualifying for 2006, it is a positive step."

"Eriksson could put two teams out on the field, with seven or eight changes at half-time. With a young squad, and with the disappointment of World Cup elimination behind them, I feel that he has to start looking to the future.

I think the fans will expect a bit of experimentation, although this fixture will be taken seriously."

"For Frank Farina, he might not have the same players around in a couple of years time. So while he is desperate to get a result, he will also have to look ahead and find the players who will take the positions soon to become available," he said.

Watts also commented on the standard of the National Soccer League in comparison to England.

"It probably measures up to the top of the Second Division, but it is difficult to gauge. Australian players over there will find the pace to be the major difference, not the ability. Obviously, the weather over here means that matches cannot be as quick as in England. There is also a difference in sporting cultures. While soccer is a matter of life and death in England, in Australia there are other codes of football and cricket, so soccer becomes a back sport," Watts said.

FEVER OVER HINDMARSH STADIUM PITCH

By Allan Crisp

Criticism over the condition of the Hindmarsh Stadium playing surface reached fever pitch during the SBS "The World Game" program last Sunday.

During the past few weeks, local soccer radio program presenters have voiced similar disapproval regarding the patch work quilt appearance of the once pristine pitch. Somehow, the bountiful reach of SBS carried a greater impact as interviewer Andrew Orsatti and Wollongong Wolves captain Stuart Young applied the voice over for the highlights of the Adelaide City Force-Newcastle United NSL game.

"I'd like to make a point about the disgraceful state of the Hindmarsh Stadium pitch," Andrew prompted.

Stuart responded, "Looking at it on TV, I was kind of wondering if it was Hindmarsh Stadium."

"Normally its the best playing surface we get to play on in Australia to see it in that mess, I cant believe it."

After his original salvo, Andrew reloaded with, "And, an all too familiar sight though, are the empty stands."

Before dealing with the complex issue of the Hindmarsh pitch,

lets set Andrew straight on the empty grandstands.

As part of its renegotiated hiring deal with the Hindmarsh Stadium management, Adelaide City decided to restrict entry to ONLY the Western Grandstand (capacity 5,500) for its home games, hence the morgue-like appearance of the other grandstands. Should the club qualify for

ance to the fact that there had been no time to scarify or top dress the pitch before the summer grass (couch) could become established.

"Our preparations were delayed further when we were led to believe that Adelaide City were going to relocate to Norwood Oval," Lang said.

"When we knew that City was staying at Hindmarsh we stepped up our work, but we were hit by another problem when POA grass (a weed that hinders the growth of couch grass) was found.

"Some areas were sprayed with poison, but unfortunately those areas were overlapped and received harmful double doses."

Lang then called in renowned experts Les Burdett (Adelaide Oval curator), Jamie Butterworth (Football Park curator) and Philip Toy (Golf Links specialist) for their advice. The good news is that damage control is under way, continuing with the elimination of the diseased grasses and the relaying of the southern goal area.

"Japanese club Verdy Tokyo, which is due here next week, have been warned not to expect the pitch to be perfect," Lang said.

"But, I'm confident that Hindmarsh Stadium will soon return to having the best playing surface in Australia, as indeed it was during the Olympic tournament."



Hindmarsh Stadium shown on a 'good' day.

the finals, that situation, we are told, would be reviewed.

On the pitch debate, explanations are called for and ABSW received those from Adelaide City midfielder Aurelio Vidmar and Hindmarsh Stadium manager Peter Lang.

"Granted the pitch looks shocking, but its as level as a billiard table and the surface is soft under foot, its great to play on," Vidmar said.

Lang traced the patchy appear-

OLYMPIC SHARKS vs NORTHERN SPIRIT



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Gary Phillips
(Manager)



Clint Bolton



Jade North



Dylan Macallister



Alex Tobin



Lawrie McKinna
(Coach)

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National League Round 21 Reports



 Sydney United	1
 Olympic Sharks	1

By Peter Damalas

Twenty one year old midfielder, Anthony Doumanis, scored a fairytale goal for Sydney United in the dying moments of their 1-1 draw with Olympic Sharks.

After being dumped by the current National Soccer League champions last season, the pint sized playmaker secured his team a point after reacting quickest when a Sean Babic header was saved by Bolton.

The equaliser sparked a frenzy of attacking raids from both sides as the match drew to a conclusion. In perhaps the most passionate local derby of the season, supporters from both sides were treated to end to end football in the second half as the home side attempt-

ed to get back into the game, following Ante Milicic's strike in the 37th minute.

With both United and Olympic missing key players Brendan Santalab and Troy Halpin respectively, it was left to the likes of Pondeljak, Porter and Doumanis to ignite the proceedings.

The ever dangerous Joel Porter sounded an appropriate warning of Olympic's attacking intentions with a shot at goal inside the first minute.

Defender Mark Rudan made a crucial intervention before Ante Juric could strike at goal in the third minute.

But Sharks goalkeeper Clint Bolton was forced into the first of a number of fine saves early in the first half, when Menapi and then Louis Brain had opportunities to score. David Barrett, playing in his former position of right wing-back,

placed an excellent cross from the touchline, and Bolton parried the ball away for a corner.

The opening goal of the match was one direct out of the coaches manual. Tom Pondeljak seized upon a slow-to-react defence, and ran towards the byline before cutting the ball back across to another former Sydney United star, Ante Milicic, who side-footed into the net with ease.

Pondeljak had an opportunity to double the score before the break.

After a run down the centre, with two defenders hanging off him, Pondeljak struck a low shot about a metre wide of the post.

If the first half was a reflection of the two teams' standing on the NSL ladder, with Olympic dominating possession in midfield and United

determined to hold on, then the second half was a statement of the passion that only local derbies can produce.

Referee Eddie Lennie reached for his pocket on four occasions as he attempted to maintain control of the match.

Olympic Sharks had a number of chances to make certain the three points.

Porter had two shots that flew wide in the first ten minutes of the second period.

Substitute Franco Parisi, having brilliantly turned his marker, marched into the penalty box and cut infield before failing at the final hurdle.

Coach Gary Phillips was disappointed about the fact that the team were not able to score a decisive second goal. "We had enough chances to win two games and enjoyed the majority of possession" he said.

Spurred on by supporters, United began to threaten Olympic's goal, and came close when Babic chipped the advancing 'keeper from an

acute angle, only to see the ball cleared underneath the crossbar by Ante Juric.

The defending champions were duly punished three minutes from time. After another fine cross by Barrett, lone striker Sean Babic had a point blank header brilliantly saved by Bolton, only for the rebound to fall into the path of the grateful Doumanis, who volleyed the ball home.

Sydney United were not finished, and created two opportunities in stoppage time to steal an unlikely victory. First, Babic's header from another cross was tipped away by Bolton, diving to his right, and sweeper Bozidar Cacic blasted wide from inside the box.

In the final minute of time added on, Hiroyuki Ishida scored what looked to be a winner for Olympic, only to be flagged away for offside. Interim United coach, Tony



It was the Anthony Doumanis (left) show as the ex-Olympic Sharks star scored the equalizing goal for Sydney United in the dying stages of the match to earn his side a valuable point.

Krslovic, described the result as fair. "I was disappointed actually not to get the three points. If only we started better in our games, we might have had seven points instead of the two we have picked up over the past three weeks" he said.

Gary Phillips admitted that the two points dropped could be crucial in the final standings. Olympic Sharks have a slender one point lead over Perth Glory as the season enters Round 22.

 Football Kingz	0
 Marconi Stallions	0

The Kingz did everything but score in their 0-0 draw with Marconi at Ericsson Stadium last night, and the one point leaves them needing miracles to make the playoffs.

Nobody could fault their commitment, but Andy Vlahos, Harry Ngata, James Pritchett and Patricio Almendra all had glorious chances which went begging.

And when a goal seemed inevitable the post and defenders' legs, and possibly arms, kept the ball out of the net.

Marconi also had chances, but Jonathon Perry and Mauro Donoso kept the dangerous Joe Spiteri under control.

Jeremy Christie's debut for the Kingz almost began with a disaster.

Fresh from Barnsley, the former New Zealand under-17 cap-

tain was caught out of position by Spiteri and pulled him down on the edge of the penalty area.

Fortunately the free-kick was cleared and Christie improved as the first half progressed.

In fact, the Kingz dominated the first quarter and should have scored.

After 19 minutes Vlahos outwitted the defence and found Almendra unmarked with the goalkeeper out of position.

But the Chilean opted for a chip which flew over the goal, when a placement might have been better.

Almendra, as usual, carried out a one-man war with the Marconi defence. His niggling tactics brought an attempted punch from Shane Webb in the 23rd minute, but referee Con Diomis decided it was a handbag wave and opted for no action.

Potentially more dangerous was a studs-up tackle from Alex Brosque, which sent Donoso to the sideline for treatment.

Brosque, a former Australian under-20 player, got behind the defence in the 32nd minute, but was thwarted by Michael Utting's legs.

On the stroke of halftime Marconi almost scored against the run of play.

Utting failed to clear from a corner and Michael Thwaite's shot was blocked on the line by Raf De Gregorio.

At halftime, Mark Beldham, whose speed on the left had stretched the Marconi defence, was replaced by the more experienced Burton.

Almost immediately the Kingz made a mess of a golden opportunity. Angelo Costanzo dallied too long on the edge of his penalty area. The ball fell to Ngata, but instead of shooting, he slipped the ball to Almendra, who was blocked.

At the other end Spiteri was just wide as the Kingz' defence lost their composure for a moment.

In the 53rd minute Pritchett volleyed a cross from Vlahos on the left, but it flew wide over a defender's shoulder.

Two minutes later Pritchett laid the ball back to Burton and he hit the post with the goalkeeper beaten.

In the 78th minute Vlahos found Ngata unmarked in front of goal, but he shot wide.

Then Burton had a free header from six metres but Webb cleared it off the line.



Stallions striker Joe Spiteri was tightly marked by a determined Kingz defence.

 Northern Spirit	3
 Wollongong Wolves	0

A decision to defer three matches has worked wonders for Northern Spirit, which downed a woeful Wollongong at Brookvale Oval last Sunday night to notch their fourth NSL win from five games.

The Spirit ended Wollongong's five-match unbeaten run with a vital victory which puts them well in the hunt for a finals berth.

Unanswered goals to Brad Groves, Stewart Petrie and Andy McDermott moved their side into seventh spot - just one point outside the top six - at the expense of the Wolves.

Many supporters and commentators were sceptical last year

when the Spirit deferred three games because of the club's heavy representation in the world under-20 championships.

They believed the players would struggle to play catch-up soccer, but the reverse has happened, with the Spirit only losing to league leaders Perth recently.

They could be forgiven for looking tired tonight after playing their third match in seven days but the home side showed more energy than the lethargic Wolves.

All the pre-match hype centred on Wolves flanker Shane Lyons, who was playing at the ground where his father, Cliff, weaved his magic for rugby league club Manly during his illustrious



Spirit defender Andy McDermott scored a rocket that finished off the Wolves 3-0 at Brookvale Oval last week.

career.

But the 23-year-old was largely ineffectual, often losing possession and failing to create inroads in a Wolves side which had just four shots at goal.

Spirit coach Lawrie McKinna would obviously be pleased with his team's form but not so happy at the chances they butchered.

Striker Macallister hit the woodwork just before the half-time break and Scotsman Petrie missed with an open goal beckoning in the 51st minute.

Substitute striker Adam Kwasnik's header hit the crossbar in the 74th minute.

Groves opened the scoring in the 21st minute, thanks to some good work from John Hutchinson and Petrie, who set up Macallister for a shot on goal.

Wolves goalkeeper Andrew Crews dived to his left but fumbled the ball, allowing Groves to lay on the finishing touches.

Petrie put the Spirit up 2-0 with a curling kick in the 79th minute while McDermott made sure of the win with an 85th minute rocket following good lead-up work from Hutchinson.

"You have to take your hats off to the boys," said McKinna, whose players have travelled to Perth and Parramatta in the past week.

"Their fitness was brilliant. To be fair, a few of them were feeling it at halftime but we said, 'we just need to keep possession, we don't need to chase the ball.'"

Wolves' coach Ron Corry said after the loss which all but ended his sides' finals hopes: "They wanted to win more than we did today, simple as that."

"We made too many basic errors and bad decisions on the park."



National League Round 21 Reports



	South Melbourne	1
	Adelaide City Force	2

South Melbourne 1 Adelaide City 2
Adelaide City put a little more distance between them and the pack breathing down their neck for a NSL playoff spot on Sunday night at Bob Jane Stadium.

The Force became the first team to beat South at home this season, but more importantly pushed four points clear of seventh-placed Northern Spirit with the victory and into fifth ahead of South on goal difference.

Goals to Scott Tunbridge and Lucas Pantelis sealed tonight's win.

Tunbridge put the Force ahead in the 20th minute, heading home the rebound after a thunderous Pantelis shot was brilliantly saved by South keeper Eugene Galekovic.

But South should have taken the lead in the eighth minute, when striker Michael Baird beat a defender, rounded the keeper, then shot hope-

lessly wide with an open goal beckoning.

After Adelaide's goal, South domi-

nated possession but couldn't convert it into goals as the Force stacked its defence.



Eye on the prize, Carl Veart (right) going head to head with South's U20 Australian international Michael Baird.

The home side came closest to an equaliser on the hour when striker Peter Buljan fired his long-range shot against the upright.

But Pantelis put the issue beyond doubt with a winner 11 minutes from time, though substitute Stephen Pace managed a late consolation goal for South in injury time.

South are now under pressure to maintain a spot in the top six, with four of their remaining five matches away from home.

Heightening South's woes is the departure of former Socceroo Fausto De Amicis, released by the club late last week.

South coach Danny Wright confirmed the long-serving defender, whose contract expired at the end of the season, had been told his services were no longer required.

"He is no longer in our plans and we gave him the opportunity to move to another club," Wright said.

Adelaide City coach Zoran Matic said he believed the only teams in the top six that were safe were Perth and Olympic Sharks, rating Northern Spirit the team which could knock



Aurelio Vidmar shown doing battle with South midfielder Steve Panopoulos for the ball during last Sunday's clash that ended in the Force's favour two-one.

one of the other four sides out of the playoff race.

"Northern Spirit are coming like a bull at a gate," he said.

"They must be dangerous - they're a problem for everybody."

	Newcastle Utd	1
	Melbourne Knights	1

Melbourne Knights secured a valuable point with a 1-1 draw with Newcastle United in the national soccer league clash at EnergyAustralia Stadium.

A dubious 51st minute penalty gave the visitors an important result in the finals quest.

United's Steve Eagleton was ruled by referee Matthew Breeze to have impeded Gustavo Biscayzacu inside the area and awarded the Knights a spot kick, much to the dismay of the 6,832 strong crowd.

Biscayzacu made sure with a low driving shot to the right of

United keeper Daniel Beltrame.

"Breeze said to me that (Peter) Tsekenis has made the tackle and taken the ball away and then Eagleton's stopped the guy from shooting," Newcastle coach Ian Crook said of his conversation with the referee in the tunnel after the match.

"I asked if Tsekenis had the ball then how can Eagleton stop the guy from scoring and then he just told me to go away.

"But I don't want to detract from what they (Melbourne) did in the second half. I thought they played very well.

"It's a tough one to swallow."

Newcastle led after half an hour when Tsekenis netted a Joe Schirripa corner at the far post.

Seven minutes earlier NSL leading goal scorer Joel Griffiths left the field after rolling his left ankle and could be sidelined for three weeks.

Melbourne came out in the second session fired up to equalise and, if not for Beltrame, may have had several more goals.

The same can be said of Knights keeper Martin John who was called upon to make some athletic saves right up until the final whistle.

"The last two weeks the boys have played fantastic," stand-in Knights coach and club captain Steven Horvat said.

"We demolished Brisbane up there and we honestly should have destroyed Auckland last week, we missed so many chances.

"Tonight the first half was disappointing for us, we gave the ball away every second pass.

"But to their credit they came out in the second half and showed the fighting spirit that they have showed the last couple of weeks."

The one point leaves the Knights in ninth place on the NSL table - four points outside the top six - while Newcastle remains alone in third spot.

AAP



Peter Tsekenis: Newcastle's hard working midfielder scored his side's only goal in their one-all draw with the Melbourne Knights.

	Brisbane Strikers	3
	Parramatta Power	0

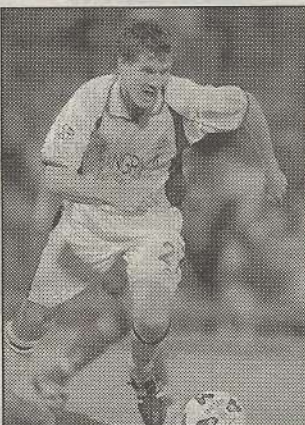
By Glenn Davis

Brisbane Strikers showed there was still life left in their bid for a finals berth with a comfortable 3-nil win over fifth placed Parramatta Power at Ballymore tonight.

The Strikers, who have had a roller coaster season, led 1-nil at halftime before scoring twice after the break to end a three-match losing streak.

After a disastrous start to the season, the Strikers put on a seven match unbeaten run before hitting a recent form slump with their three defeats. Despite the recent losses, nothing has changed for the Strikers who need to win all its remaining matches to be assured of a finals berth.

The Strikers, who hovered just outside the top six for several weeks before hitting their bad patch, took



Anthony Roche scored his tenth goal of the season for the Strikers.

control of their Parramatta game with a spectacular start to the second half.

The Strikers led 1-nil at the break after a 40th minute header from defender Jon McKain broke an absorbing first half deadlock.

McKain, one of the Strikers' best on the night, rose high above the defence to head a free kick from the sideline struck by midfielder Peter Grierson.

McKain's header was knocked down by keeper Liam Reddy which gave the lanky defender a second bite to snap home from close range with his left foot.

Parramatta hardly had time to set their formation for the start of the second half when the Strikers went two up within 20 seconds of the kick-off.

Brazilian midfielder Fernando Rech stunned the visitors when he took on the Parramatta defence from the restart and within 20 seconds unleashed a powerful shot at Reddy. Reddy could only parry the left foot piledriver in the air which fell perfectly for Anthony Roche to head home on the goal-line.

Brisbane started Tahitian international Felix Tagawa for the first time and was closely marked by Parramatta. The New Caledonia-born Tagawa was kept relatively quiet until he bobbed up with a goal in his national league debut in the 63rd minute to give the Strikers an unbeatable 3-nil lead.

Tagawa's diving header came off a sharp cross from the left flank from fullback Shane Stefanutto who managed to get around the back of the Parramatta defence.

Tagawa has waited more than three months for registration before

pulling on the Strikers strip and his performance pleased coach John Kosmina.

"I thought Felix did quite well for his first game," Kosmina said.

"He gave me the option of starting with two out and out strikers.

"Roche was a bit quiet but he had a virus all week and did well under the circumstances."

Kosmina believes the Strikers, who meet South Melbourne in a crucial encounter to their finals hopes on Wednesday, could still make the finals if they draw one of their remaining games.

"We could possibly still make the finals if we draw one along the way but ideally we need to win them all."

While the second half was clearly dominated by the Strikers, the opening period was shared evenly with the visitors marginally having the better opportunities.

Parramatta had the majority of possession in the first half but failed to crack the youthful Strikers' defence, which was without suspended former Socceroo Steve Laybutt.

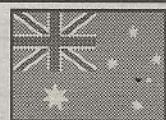
Parramatta looked the livelier of the two sides early in the game and took only four minutes to snare its first chance when keeper Jason Kearton made a superb save down low at the near post to deny a 25 metre shot from Ahmad Elrich.

The Strikers responded six minutes later with Fernando Rech making a spectacular diving header inside the box, which sailed over the crossbar.

Kearton was never stretched when called on for the second time midway through the opening half after some neat work from John Buonavoglia who cut inside before rifling a shot from outside the box straight into Kearton's arms.

Parramatta's best first half chance came in the 17th minute when Peter Zorbas drove a 20 metre shot onto the cross bar after being set-up by the hard working Brad Maloney.

BYE - PERTH GLORY



Socceroos Squad



The big friendly clash between the Australians and the English is only a few days away and already the media exposure on this event has hit fever pitch.

Explained in the next page is a comprehensive wrap on the players involved, some statistics, Media coverage on the match and expert tips from various ABSW correspondence.

Be advised that ABSW will be there in person watching the match at Upton Park in Perth correspondent Richard Kreider who will provide a montage of this memorable event in forthcoming ABSW editions.

Mark Schwarzer  POSITION: Goalkeeper AGE: 30 CURRENT CLUB: MIDDLESBROUGH – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 196cm WEIGHT: 86kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 20 (19/1)	Zeljko Kalac  POSITION: Goalkeeper AGE: 30 CURRENT CLUB: PERUGIA – Italy – Serie A HEIGHT: 202cm WEIGHT: 91kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 41 (38/3)	Tony Vidmar  POSITION: Defender AGE: 32 DATE OF BIRTH: 4th July 1970 CURRENT CLUB: MIDDLESBROUGH – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 187cm WEIGHT: 80kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 68 (53/15) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 2 (2/0)	Kevin Muscat  POSITION: Defender AGE: 29 DATE OF BIRTH: 7th August 1973 CURRENT CLUB: GLASGOW RANGERS – Scotland – Premier League HEIGHT: 180cm WEIGHT: 73kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 42 (37/5) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 10 (10/0)	Craig Moore  POSITION: Defender AGE: 27 DATE OF BIRTH: 12th December 1975 CURRENT CLUB: GLASGOW RANGERS – Scotland – Premier League HEIGHT: 186cm WEIGHT: 76kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 22 (20/2) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 2 (2/0)
Tony Popovic  POSITION: Defender AGE: 29 DATE OF BIRTH: 4th July 1973 CURRENT CLUB: CRYSTAL PALACE – ENGLAND – First Division HEIGHT: 193cm WEIGHT: 90kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 41 (39/2) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 7 (6/1)	Lucas Neill  POSITION: Defender AGE: 24 DATE OF BIRTH: 9th March, 1978 CURRENT CLUB: BLACKBURN ROVERS – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 183cm WEIGHT: 80kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 2 (2/0) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 0 (0/0)	Stan Lazaridis  POSITION: Defender/Midfielder AGE: 30 DATE OF BIRTH: 16th August 1972 CURRENT CLUB: BIRMINGHAM CITY – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 175cm WEIGHT: 76kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 55 (44/11) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 0	Brett Emerton  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 23 DATE OF BIRTH: 22nd February 1979 CURRENT CLUB: FEYENOORD – Holland – First Division HEIGHT: 185cm WEIGHT: 85kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 27 (22/5) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 5 (4/1)	Marco Bresciano  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 23 DATE OF BIRTH: 11th February 1980 CURRENT CLUB: PARMA – Italy – Serie A HEIGHT: 172cm WEIGHT: 76kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 6 (6/0) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 0
Paul Okon  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 30 DATE OF BIRTH: 5th April 1972 CURRENT CLUB: LEEDS UNITED – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 180cm WEIGHT: 80kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 34 (25/9) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 1 (0/1)	Vince Grella  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 23 DATE OF BIRTH: 5th October 1979 CURRENT CLUB: EMPOLI – Italy – Serie A HEIGHT: 183cm WEIGHT: 79kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 3 (0/3) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 0	Josip Skoko  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 27 DATE OF BIRTH: 10th December 1975 CURRENT CLUB: RACING GENK – Belgium – First Division HEIGHT: 177cm WEIGHT: 77kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 24 (23/1) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 2 (2/0)	Scott Chipperfield  POSITION: Midfielder AGE: 27 DATE OF BIRTH: 30th December 1975 CURRENT CLUB: FC BASEL – Switzerland – First Division HEIGHT: 180cm WEIGHT: 70 kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 24 (24/0) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 8 (8/0)	Harry Kewell  POSITION: Midfielder/Striker AGE: 24 DATE OF BIRTH: 22nd September 1978 CURRENT CLUB: LEEDS UTD – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 179cm WEIGHT: 77kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 13 (12/1) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 3 (3/0)
Mile Sterjovski  POSITION: Midfielder/Striker AGE: 23 DATE OF BIRTH: 27th May 1979 CURRENT CLUB: LILLE – France – First Division HEIGHT: 180cm WEIGHT: 79kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 3 (3/0) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 0 (0/0)	Mark Viduka  POSITION: Striker AGE: 27 DATE OF BIRTH: 9th October 1975 CURRENT CLUB: LEEDS UTD – England – Premier League HEIGHT: 187cm WEIGHT: 91kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 21 (19/2) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 2 (2/0)	John Aloisi  POSITION: Striker AGE: 27 DATE OF BIRTH: 5th February 1976 CURRENT CLUB: ATHLETICO OSASUNA – Spain – Primera Liga HEIGHT: 188cm WEIGHT: 83kg SENIOR APPEARANCES ("A"/OTHER): 25 (24/1) SENIOR GOALS ("A"/OTHER): 15 (15/0)	Graham Arnold  (Assistant Coach)	Frank Farina  (Socceroos Coach)



England Squad



Paul Robinson  CURRENT CLUB: Leeds United	Sol Campbell  CURRENT CLUB: Arsenal	Ashley Cole  CURRENT CLUB: Arsenal	Rio Ferdinand  CURRENT CLUB: Manchester United	Gary Neville  CURRENT CLUB: Manchester United
David Beckham  CURRENT CLUB: Manchester United	Paul Scholes  CURRENT CLUB: Manchester United	Danny Murphy  CURRENT CLUB: Liverpool	Kieron Dyer  CURRENT CLUB: Newcastle United	James Beattie  CURRENT CLUB: Southampton
Michael Owen  CURRENT CLUB: Liverpool	Richard Wright  CURRENT CLUB: Everton	Danny Mills  CURRENT CLUB: Leeds United	Ledley King  CURRENT CLUB: Tottenham Hotspur	Paul Konchesky  CURRENT CLUB: Charlton Athletic
David James  CURRENT CLUB: West Ham United	Wes Brown  CURRENT CLUB: Manchester United	Matthew Upson  CURRENT CLUB: Birmingham	Frank Lampard  CURRENT CLUB: Chelsea	
Owen Hargreaves  CURRENT CLUB: Bayern Munich	Joe Cole  CURRENT CLUB: West Ham United	Scott Parker  CURRENT CLUB: Charlton Athletic	Wayne Rooney  CURRENT CLUB: Everton	Darius Vassell  CURRENT CLUB: Aston Villa
Jermaine Jenas  CURRENT CLUB: Newcastle United	Scott Parker  CURRENT CLUB: Charlton Athletic	Sean Davis  CURRENT CLUB: Fulham	Francis Jeffers  CURRENT CLUB: Arsenal	

MEDIA COVERAGE

The historic soccer international football match to be played at London's Upton Park, will be seen **LIVE AND EXCLUSIVE** on SBS on **THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY, 2003**.

The game represents the first time the Australian national soccer team will have been hosted by England, despite the century old traditional rivalry between the two nations in other sports.

Certainly a match not to be missed by anyone it will be the Socceroos first hit-out as Farina's charge hope towards a 2006 World Cup spot.

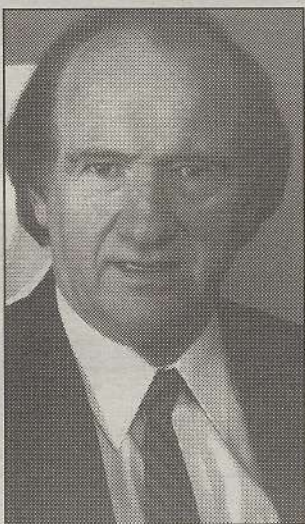
Many other high quality international sides have been linked in playing with the Socceroos, Uruguay, Ireland and Argentina have all reportedly shown interest in playing the green and gold's.

With probably one of the best Australian sides ever seen, Farina will be out to impress the public with his new squad which has seen three new faces to the side.

England will no doubt be at its best in getting one over their fiercest rivals the Australians so no love loss will be seen during this match-up.

SBS last week announced a major scoop in attaining the rights to showing all of England's remaining friendly and international matches until 2004 on the box and have also gained the rights to the FA Cup quarter and finals for the next two seasons.

LIVE - Thursday 13 February @ 6.00 am (AEST)*



Colin Turner will be calling the match LIVE over the radio waves this coming Thursday.

(South Australia @ 5.30am, Queensland @ 5.00 am, Darwin @ 4.30am, Perth @ 3.00am)

REPLAY (ALL CENTRES) @ 7.00pm

Also, don't forget that the match will also be cast live over the Radio Waves in Sydney's Radio 2 (1611AM).

Radio 2 host will be the man of Soccer Radio Colin Turner who will kick-off proceedings at 6.45am.

Having had a lot of experiences behind the microphone, Turner is coming off a successful World Cup 2002 show and is currently running a few NSL matches a week.

Eddie Thomson losing battle against cancer

Former Socceroo coach Eddie Thomson is losing his battle against cancer and has been told he has only has weeks to live.

Thomson talks about his fight against cancer in the following article published in the Edinburgh Evening News in Scotland.

The 55-year-old revealed how he was "completely floored" after being diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease 18 months ago.

And, although he went into remission a year ago after undergoing treatment, including chemotherapy, Edinburgh-born Thomson has now been told his cancer has returned.

Now it is only a matter of time until Thomson, who spent almost seven years at Tynecastle after playing for Whitehill Welfare and Penicuik Athletic, dies.

Thomson had been living in Japan managing J-League outfit Sanfrecce Hiroshima when he was told he had cancer during a six-month holiday in Australia where he moved in 1977 after a spell with Aberdeen.

He said: "I just went for a

normal blood check and surprise, surprise, they found I had lymphoma.

"I was completely floored because I'd never felt better in my life."

Thomson's son Steven, an advertising copywriter, flew from Singapore to be with his father and mother, Pauline (56), while daughter Claire has taken time out from her job to be at home.

And former Hibs boss Alex McLeish, a team-mate at Pittodrie, ex-Dons boss Sir Alex Ferguson and Drew Jarvie, a pal from their days together with Aberdeen, have all been in touch by telephone.

Speaking from his home in Sydney, Thomson vowed to soldier on, having already confounded doctors who said he only had three weeks to live five weeks ago.

Thomson revealed how his cancer had returned only three months after going into remission. He said: "It came back aggressively."

"This is one of the easiest cancers to cure but it's the easiest to return. I've tried just about everything but unfortunately I can't shake it."

"It's just a matter of time."

However, Thomson courageously talked of a life which saw him combine his early Hearts career with a job as an apprentice drawer at the Tweed Mills in Peebles.

Thomson went on to captain Hearts, leading them to the final of the Texaco Cup in 1971, winning three Scotland under-23 caps and a Scottish League cap in the process. An all-round defender who even had a spell at centre-forward in his final season with Hearts, Thomson was also a member of the Tynecastle side which lost the Scottish Cup final to Dunfermline in 1968.

He was sold to Aberdeen for £60,000, much to the fans' surprise, Thomson saying: "Back in those days, Hearts didn't have much money and the only player they could sell at that time was me, so off I went."

Thomson later moved to San Antonio Thunder in the United States and then on to Sydney City, winning the League championship both as a player and manager.

He had a spell as assistant manager of the Australian



Former Socceroo coach Eddie Thomson is losing the fight against cancer.

national team, becoming boss of the 'Socceroos' in 1990 before moving to Japan six years later.

He said: "I have had a great life, I've really enjoyed it. Now I'm just determined to make the most of the time I have."

"I feel fine just now. The amount of time you hear of people who have been written off but are still alive keeps me going. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed".

STANTON STANDING TALL AT THE WOLVES

By Daniel Kuziwo

Since joining the Wollongong Wolves at the commencement of the 1997/98, Robbie Stanton has featured in two Premiership winning sides and has become an integral part of what many regard as a rebuilding phase at the club.

In recent weeks, Stanton has scored two crucial goals, the first against Newcastle United and the second against Sydney United some two weeks ago.

The latter of the two broke a fun of four straight draws for the South Coast side and victory that day pushed Ron Corry's side to the frontier of the coveted National League top six.

"I have been pretty happy with my own form so far and that of the team," said Stanton.

"In fact I am enjoying my football now more than I ever did," he added.

Inconsistency this season has cost Stanton and his team-mates the opportunity to seize a place in the top half of the ladder.

To Round 19 the Wolves had

recorded no fewer than eight draws but have managed only just as many losses as third placed Newcastle United.

Asked what it would take for his Wolves team to feature in the post season, Stanton confessed: "We need to get at least another three victories."

The run into the finals is pretty tough because we still have Perth Glory and the Olympic Sharks to play.

But to be honest I think the competition has been very even this year and I don't think it really makes a great difference: who you are actually playing.

The only thing is the more home games you have a

lot more of an advantage, but other than that the teams are pretty even on the day and any team is capable of beating anyone."

Coach Ron Corry last week came out and said that his current side were on the verge of another Wolves golden era due to the large number of young players racing through the ranks.

"I also think we are on the verge of something big. I think we have a good balance of younger players and the more senior ones and I think things

will happen within two-years," confessed Stanton.

"I don't believe however it puts extra pressure on Stuart Young David Cervinski and myself. We are used to it and are happy to take on that responsibility. At the moment we don't have an assistant coach so it has given us that little bit extra, but we are all quite happy to do it," Stanton declared.

Since his debut at the Wolves some six years back 'Stanno' has played with a number of players currently cutting it in the leagues of Europe.

Names such as Saso Petrovski, Scott Chipperfield, Les Pogliacomi and youngster Jay Lucas have all spent time at the south-coast nursery and this phenomenon has not been overlooked by Stanton who said: "I think it's the environment down at Wollongong and the fact that a lot of the players are from the area and I think it's the way they have been brought up."

"When we won two championships, we worked so hard on the team aspect of the game and we gelled so well as a team and I think the players coming through have this good environment to play in."

Also you get good media

exposure through WIN television and the Illawarra Mercury and sport is taken well in the

culture and playing personnel; "The big change has seen players going full time professional but

are coming through the ranks and many are even bypassing the NSL to go straight overseas."

But in terms of the level, it was a lot more aggressive back in the early 1990's. Many have said it is not as strong but I think there is a lot of talent going around now."

An essential part of the Wolves set up, Stanton has gained immense respect and praise from the Wollongong fraternity.

He is the most experienced of the current crop of players having played over 140 games in the in the black and red.

In spite of that, his immediate future is not yet resolved at the club; "At the moment there a lot of players at the club and the League in general who are coming off contract."

I would like to stay at the Wolves but you never know what line they want to take next year with the uncertainty of competition.

But at the moment I am pretty confident and happy to stay at Wollongong.

"I'd like to be playing for at least another two year. I am only 30 and there are a lot of players running around who are four or five years older than me," he concluded.



Robbie Stanton has lived loyal to the Wollongong Wolves and has gone through many monumental times with the side.

Illawarra region."

Stanton began his National Soccer League career during the 1990/91 season and has since featured in over 300 NSL for Sydney United, Marconi and Wollongong. In his 12 year career he has noticed modest change in the competition struc-

overall there has not been a great change.

The level of football has changed differently but I think it has been a different type of football. Before there were a lot of older players playing in the competition.

Today a lot of younger players

Letters to the Editor

BRILLIANT MATCH

Dear Sir,
Two weeks ago I attended the Olympic Sharks versus South Melbourne match at Toyota Park and was pleasantly surprised by the match standards.

Olympic went ahead through a very early goal but South Melbourne responded and as it turned out the match was only settled with a goal in the last five minutes of the game.

There was end-to-end action from each side and it is a credit to the players for their effort over the 90 minutes.

What was so striking however was the degree of closeness between the two sides. While Olympic currently sit second and South Melbourne sit just below them, it was very hard to separate the two sides over the course of the game.

I believe all the sides in the top six at least are very equal when it comes to their playing staff and style of play. As well as that I

think that sides seven through nine have the capacity to be in the top six but lack consistency.

This match nevertheless is not the only game I use to make these assumptions.

In Adelaide on Friday, Adelaide City went two goals up and narrowly the game three goals to two but not before they scored three goals themselves.

In Wollongong, the Wolves got up by two goals to one while Marconi came from one goal down to also win by the same margin.

At this time of year particularly with only a few rounds until the end of the regular season more is riding at stake in each of the games and so I believe the contests will be a lot tighter in nature.

So while the standards are generally equal when it comes to the top sides it will now be even harder to separate them.

John Tsousidis,
Roseville, NSW.

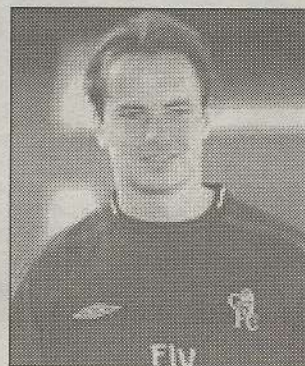
BOZZA IN TROUBLE

Dear Sir,
What a shame and what a sad fall from grace Mark Bosnich has experienced since being found guilty of testing positive to cocaine.

This week I read that he has come out and said that his drink was spiked and that is why he tested positive. This is a poor excuse for an even poorer excuse of a soccer player. Any individual has to accept the consequences of his actions and by Bosnich coming out

and saying what he said indeed shows a lack of character on his part.

Perhaps though it is not uncommon for Bosnich as when initial tests discovered the drug he said he was depressed. Depressed can I ask from what getting paid some \$40 000 a week to play reserve team football? This prompted me to think that then he had no sense of responsibility or decency and his latest outburst has justified my reasoning for this.



Mark Bosnich.

Shame on you Mark Bosnich. As everyone knows, rule when you go out is to not leave your drink unattended. If it was spiked as you claim it to be, not only should you be charged, but you should also be ousted and vilified for sheer stupidity and incompetence on your part.

Crawl into the gutter gracefully. You no longer have the respect to do it any other way.

Lee Carlaw,
Penrith, NSW.

TOBIN THE GREAT

Dear Sir,
I would like to resubmit my letter of last week regarding the achievements of Alex Tobin. He deserves special mention for his achievements and this only adds to his distinguished career.

He is a true gentleman of the game and is the perfect ambassador for it. We have seen his noble and dignified nature throughout his long and industrious and this is reflected in his desire to stay and play in Australia when he could have quite easily tied his luck overseas.

I remember fondly his appearances in the green and gold and once again he was the perfect ambassador for the game and Australia in general. It is perhaps fitting that he also holds the record for the number of times to have represented Australia.

He did more than just play soccer and I recall when he was heading a Parramatta Power initiative of a fundraising BBQ at Parramatta Station. He was superb in his actions

and community service and used his standing as an athlete to benefit those less fortunate than himself when we have clearly seen that others in the same situation as him would have neglected these actions.

No one else deserves this award more than Alex Tobin does. His commitment and passion towards the game have not wavered even after some 490 games. He has been a gentleman in every sense of the word both on and off the field and once again a reflection of this perhaps is the fact that of all the football codes played in Australia he is head and shoulders above the rest as the person to have played the longest.

He has given so much to the game and we should give some recognition to him and if I can do this by saying you are a worthy recipient to be the first player to make 500 NSL games then so be it.

Congratulations Alex Tobin!
Kevin Todd,
Adelaide, SA.

WE HAVE MANY ROONEY'S!

Dear Sir,
Everton's rising young superstar Wayne Rooney has certainly grabbed the headlines this Premier League season for being one of the rising youngsters in England.

Apart from Rooney we've seen players like Jermaine Jenas, James Milner, Paul Robinson and many more excel this Premier League year. Here in Australia, we too are fortunate enough to have young future stars of our very own.

Apart from the one's that have left our shores and have already gone to the other side like Jay Lucas, Brett Holman, Spase Dilevski, Carl Valeri, Nathan Coe, James Wesolowski and many more, the NSL has a number of youthful stars ready to take on the big guns.

Each team has a player or two that is under the age of 21 that is ready for bigger and better things.

I have watched many matches for the past 5 seasons and have drawn up a player or two from each club that I think will be big in years to come. Adelaide City Force - Iain Fyfe, Nick Budin

Brisbane Strikers - Jon McKain, Matthew McKay
Football Kingz - James Pritchett, Darren Young
Marconi Stallions - Alex

Brosque, Michael Thwaite
Melbourne Knights - Daniel Piorowski, Daniel Rocco
Newcastle United - Jobe Wheelhouse, Tom Willis.
Northern Spirit - Alex Wilkinson, Jonathon Richter
Olympic Sharks - Franco Parisi, Matt Hilton
Parramatta Power - Matthew Thompson
Perth Glory - David Tarka, Anthony Danze
South Melbourne - Massimo Murococa, Vince Lia
Sydney United - Anthony Doumanis, Brendan Santalab
Wollongong Wolves - Dustin Wells, Jacob Timpano

This is just a rough layout of who I think will be big in the near future.

There are a number of other talents also currently at various youth sides and Institutes across Australia that are also doing quite well.

It's good to see that the youth development is on a high as every year this country produces a number of stars that jet off to Europe.

Keep up the good work, as the future is youth!

It's good to see ABSW supporting the youngsters, something not seen in past years, keep that going!
Kevin Mosely,
Box Hill, VIC.

Could I Be Wrong?

Dear Sir,
A few months back I sent a letter to the editor stating that the acquisition of Remo Nogarotto as head chairman of Soccer Australia would be the death of the code.

I find myself in a situation whereby I can't help but acknowledge the work he and his new team have been doing for the code.

I know I was cynical on his appointment at first but have been rather impressed as to what he has done for the code at the moment.

First and foremost he has already grabbed three major sponsors for soccer that being QANTAS, Adidas and Castlemaine.

Secondly he has started well in organizing friendly matches with quality opposition.

And finally a reform looks in sight for season 04/05 which will see clubs and the code become a recognizable force in sport throughout this country.

I know I was quick to give Remo the thumbs down at the start but have since reconsidered my decision and will applaud at what's been seen at the moment.

In saying this I hope that this is merely not a sign of things to stop and that the good news for soccer in this country continues to grow.

I love soccer, I live and breathe it and the one thing I wish and hope to see before anything is seeing soccer as the main sport in Australia!

David Zetter,
Doncaster, VIC.



Come On Aussies

Dear Editor,
Only a handful of days until the 'Big One' and I can't wait to see the new look Socceroos enter the field at Upton Park against the English.

The anticipation of this match has been on my mind since day one.

Who would have thought a year back that this would ever have occurred?

Its credit that SA has started to notice that aspects such as gaining credible friendlies like this will surely

benefit football in this country.

I'm an ex-pat from England and have been a citizen of this country for well over 30 years now and can't wait to see this clash.

The likes of Kewell, Viduka, Neill tackle on Beckham, Campbell, Owen and co is one that I'd pay for big time.

Here's hoping for an upset, GO THE SOCCEROOS!

Shawn Wright,
Coogee, NSW.

APPALING WOLVES

Dear Sir,
After reading the letter dated 4-2-03 titled 'Rejection of release by Wollongong Wolves to AIS' one should ask the question of how professional is this NSL club?

Clearly evident in this situation is that the Wolves are in the wrong, not letting two of their youngsters go to the AIS for extra training, in that gaining expert tips from the finest institutes in the world is a crying shame.

After reading the letter, its not as if the young boys were going to another NSL club, they were

merely going to an Institute to further their skills, what's wrong with that?

I am not a Wolves fan and I do not live in the area however I have been following the National League for quite some time now and observed one point coming from this issue. The club had Dustin Wells, a current Young Socceroo at the AIS not too long ago.

They brought him over from there a ready-made player for the NSL and look where he is

now, a Young Socceroo.

He wasn't a product of the Wolves however trained at the AIS and yet Wollongong sought for his services and at the moment from the looks of things he is certainly looking the goods.

What's to say that these two youngsters won't do the same?

Not letting them go to further their trainings as individuals is one huge mistake that could sidetrack these potential

stars in the future.

As a parent as well, I too would be rather upset and angry at the way the club was treating my kids like the Wolves have done to these youngsters.

I hope that this resolves itself and that the boys gain their dream in playing for the AIS.

Shame on you Wollongong, maybe if the club thought of it properly this would actually benefit them in a big way not disadvantage it.

Richard Gillian,
Malabar, NSW.



Tobin The Professor

Dear Sir,
It was a great way to see Alex Tobin notch up his 500th NSL match in Perth against the Glory a few weeks back.

Unfortunately the game would not have got 10,000 people to the ground in Sydney had they played at North Sydney Oval whereas the Perth crowd is always around that mark. The man did so much for soccer in this country, whether it was playing for a National League club or his country and serving as skipper, he always did the code proud.

Let's not forget off the field as well. People should remember the TV show 'Sale of the Century' whereby Tobin was always the man representing soccer in the battle of the football codes.

'Professor' would be the best term used for this guy, not only is he intelligent on the field, but he matches that off it. I think he as at least another two years left ahead of him, he is a true blue Australian, in that he's got that never say die attitude.

It was credit to see Alex in ABSW last week on the front and back pages recognizing the feats achieved by this man.

I think we should be worried that

it wasn't that highly emphasized in any other papers or on television but then again, this is the only soccer paper in Australia and its great to have seen Tobin given the wraps he only deserves. Don't know whether he will read this but I congratulate his magnificent feat and hope he can do something for the code after he finishes up.

Wouldn't be nice to see the 'Professor' at Soccer Australia.

A man of his expertise would be highly useful at SA, and now that the code is on a real roll, hiring ex-Stars especially Tobin would only benefit soccer in the best way possible.

Frank Crisco,
Merrylands, NSW.



Alex Tobin: Recently notched up his 500th NSL match.

OFF THE CROSSBAR



By Allan Crisp

The opening round of the Federation Cup has tossed together reigning Premier League champions Raiders and freshly promoted Enfield Falcons at the Croatian Sports Complex on Saturday, March 1.

Adelaide Galaxy, under new coach Alby Kidd has drawn Premier League counterpart Adelaide City, now under the coaching baton of Cosi Salerno.

The latter assumed command after former State coach Jan Kierno resigned in concert with NSL coach Charley Villani.

The knock-out cup tournament is the South Australian version of the English FA Cup as it mixes and matches all comers from the Premier League, State League and South Australian Amateur League clubs.

A round one lottery means that Adelaide Cobras must grab the water bottles and travel from Weigall Oval at Plympton to cross the border to tackle NSW club Broken Hill.

Cobras coach Nick Pantaras, who is accustomed to travel having coached NSL club West Adelaide, must condition his team for the journey.

New Port Pirates coach, Derek Hall will be able to test his fresh faced State League youngsters against Premier League hardened Modbury Jets.

Jets coach Duane Gray starts his seventh season in charge at Golden Grove, banking on locally produced players to keep the flag flying.

Other Premier League clubs, MetroStars, Croydon Kings, Playford Patriots and Blue Eagles know that it will not be simply a matter of turning up against State League opposition determined to spring traditional cup upsets.

With the exception of the Broken Hill v Cobras tie, which kicks-off at 7pm, all other games start at 2.30pm.

FEDERATION CUP FIRST ROUND

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

Broken Hill v Cobras

MetroStars v Western

Strikers

Port Pirates v Modbury Jets

Old Ignatians v Campbelltown City
Port Pirie City v Croydon Kings
Raiders v Enfield Falcons
Playford Patriots v Noarlunga Bulldogs
Blue Eagles v Cumberland Foxes
Panthers v Northern Demons
Galaxy v Adelaide City

First round byes went to White City, Para Hills Knights, Hills Hawks, Seaford Surfers, Salisbury United, Olympic FC.

FRANK v SVEN

This weeks eagerly awaited England v Australia match at Upton Park appears to be a complete mismatch.

A mismatch, not from the aspect of the capabilities of the players, but because of the wide gap in experience of the coaches, Sven-Goran Eriksson and Frank Farina.

England boss Eriksson won league titles in Sweden, Portugal and Italy before pulling on the track suit bearing the Three Lions logo.

He started his new job in January 2001 and has won the won the admiration of the English public because he immediately demonstrated he is a modern man who based his style on the use of common-sense.

Eriksson has a dream start, leading England to a 3-0 win

over Spain in a friendly home international and carried his unbeaten sequence to five in subsequent matches.

He clinched a place for England in Korea-Japan after a distinguished coaching career with Degerfors, IFK Gothenburg, Benfica, AS Roma, AC Fiorentina, Sampdoria and Lazio.

Farina has been there and done that as well, outstripping Eriksson as a player with Galaxy star, Mark Graham for the Stars to claim a share of the spoils. State regular George Tsonis gave Olympic FC an opening to upset the Blue Eagles, but Sam Monterosa netted his third goal of the tournament for a duplicate 1-1 verdict.

Bianco series semi-finals will be decided tomorrow night (Wednesday, February 12), with the final and third placed play-offs scheduled for Friday, February 21.

SASI rallied to inflict a 7-0 defeat on Seaford Surfers during the Fleet Street Southern Summer Series at Wilf Taylor Reserve.

Noarlunga Bulldogs took the sting out of Adelaide Cobras with a thrilling 3-2 game.

SASI 7 (Thornton 3, Armstrong, Tobias,

Lets be "Frank" - "Sven" is it safe to bet on this intriguing match?

LEVEL PEGGING

It was an even Stevens night when the Bianco Night Series resumed at Marden Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Croydon Kings forced a 1-1 draw with MetroStars in the first of the double headers with Craig Woods counting for the Kings, while ex-Galaxy star, Mark Graham for the Stars to claim a share of the spoils. State regular George Tsonis gave Olympic FC an opening to upset the Blue Eagles, but Sam Monterosa netted his third goal of the tournament for a duplicate 1-1 verdict.

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DOWN SOUTH

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SASI 7 (Thornton 3, Armstrong, Tobias,

Catanzaran, Hughes) Seaford 0.

Best SASI: Armstrong, Marrone, Gounder; Seaford: Hewson, Dane, Lenartowicz.

Noarlunga Bulldogs 3 (Still 2, P. Paris) Adelaide Cobras 2 (Skambrod, Bovzovdis). Best Noarlunga: Mather, S. Huybregts, Still; Cobras: Greenwood, Skambrod, Pantend.

BIG SCREEN SCENE

Campbelltown City Soccer Club will present the England v Australia match live on the big screen at its Newton clubrooms (corner Stradbroke Road and Whites Lane) on Thursday (February 13). Gates will open at 5.15am.

The telecast starts at 5.30am with the kick-off set for 6am. The admission price is \$10, which includes a full English Breakfast, plus unlimited refills of coffee or tea will be on offer.

Bookings can be made by contacting Mario Scalzi (0413.492.145) or Fred Goldstone (0411.444.899) or at the club office today (Tuesday, February 11) from 10am and 6pm (8337.0907).

RAPID RISE

When the Adelaide City Womens soccer team was formed six years ago, it could muster just seven players.

City now has ten teams in the South Australian Womens

Soccer Association.

Club spokesman, Stefan Metanowski says that the only limitation to further growth is that ten is the allowable number.

Arguably, Adelaide City is the largest women's soccer club in Australia.

City has introduced young players with junior development a primary focus seen as the way to realise some lofty ambitions.

The objectives include playing in a national league and or an Asian league.

With an anticipated 80 junior players ready to back a similar number of senior players, the future is indeed bright.

City broke new ground last Sunday when it accepted an invitation by the women's component of the South Melbourne club to field its Premier League team against the South side in a curtain raiser to the South v Force NSL match at Bob Jane Stadium.

City's trip and that of its reserve team, to Melbourne was backed by the generous support of Gordon Pickard of Fairmont Homes and Premier Stateliner for discounting its normal bus transportation cost.

Also attending Bob Jane Stadium were representatives from New South Wales and Victorian clubs who discussed the possibilities of a Womens national league and or an Asian League.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

2002/2003

ROUND 1 RESULTS

Port Melbourne Sharks SC	0	Green Gully Cavaliers SC	2
		(S. Storey (24'), A. Vargas (76'))	
Frankston Pines SC	5	Bulleen Zebras SC	2
(Peter Hadjer 3, Simon Webster, Nick Waite)		(Stelios Drakos, Berkan Sakaci)	
Altona Magic SC	3	Bentleigh Greens SC	3
(own goal, Zoran Petrevski, Kocic Delev)		(Peter Kakos 2, Juan Nilo)	
Fawkner Blues SC	1	Preston Lions SC	0
(Carmelo Impiombato)			
St Albans Saints SC	2	Altona East Phoenix SC	0
(Joe Bacak, Daniel Debevc)			
(Second goal given as own goal)			

ROUND 1 - TABLE

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Frankston Pines SC	1	1	0	0	5	2	3
2. Green Gully Cavaliers SC	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
3. St Albans Saints SC	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
4. Fawkner Blues SC	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
5. Altona Magic SC	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
6. Bentleigh Greens SC	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
7. Preston Lions SC	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
8. Port Melbourne Sharks SC	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
9. Altona East Phoenix SC	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
10. Bulleen Zebras SC	1	0	0	1	2	5	0

ROUND 2

Sat, 15 Feb, 6:00 PM, Kingston Heath Soccer Complex

Bentleigh Greens SC vs. Fawkner Blues SC

Sun, 16 Feb, 6:00 PM, Paisley Res

Altona East Phoenix SC vs. Frankston Pines SC

Sun, 16 Feb, 6:00 PM, BT Connor Res

Preston Lions SC vs. St Albans Saints SC

Sun, 16 Feb, 6:00 PM, Reggio Calabria Club

Essendon Royals SC vs. Altona Magic SC

Sun, 16 Feb, 7:00 PM, Green Gully Res

Green Gully Cavaliers SC vs. Whittlesea Stallions SC

Mon, 17 Feb, 8:15 PM, Veneto Club

Bulleen Zebras SC vs. Port Melbourne Sharks SC

VICTORIAN CHRONICLES

By Brendon Davis

Trimboli - The End?

With the media spotlight focusing on the 500th NSL appearance of Damian Mori, the career threatening injury to the Victorian superstar of the NSL, Paul Trimboli was overshadowed.

Trimboli sustained a serious knee injury when Olympics Joel Porter fell across his knee in last weeks match.

The doctors have ruled Trimboli out of the game for at least four months, essentially finishing his season. Beyond this the decision regarding his future will be made over the close season, in consultation no doubt with Danny Wright.

With Robert Liparoti also on the long term injury list, Vin Lia, Vaughn Coveny, Michael Baird and Massimo Murococa all on international duty the depth of the South squad is being seriously tested further fuelling the club versus country debate.

Top Knight Arrives

As QF0002 touched down at Tullamarine on Thursday the Knights Board were on hand to welcome back their 1995/1996 National Soccer League Coach Mirko Bazic from Europe.

In addition to the Knights Directors a significant media scrum were assembled; as soon as he'd cleared customs he had to complete his first media conference. The heat of a Melbourne winter was in stark contrast to the -10 degree temperatures prevailing in Croatia.

He was soon off to training at Sommers Street, despite the tough flight from Frankfurt. Tomorrow he's back on an airplane, this time to assist the Knights in their fight for a finals berth in their tough road trip to Newcastle.

Knights General Manager, John Ovcacic explained to ABSW that Bazic

returns to Sunshine as Coaching Director, not as coach but Bazic is clearly anxious to return to the Knights fold.

And despite this weeks match against Newcastle, Bazic let it be known how much he is looking forward to challenging arch rivals South Melbourne in next weeks derby.



Mirko Bazic

Big Names To Yarraville

Popular State League team Yarraville has undergone a radical transformation over the close season.

The club is now coached by former South Melbourne star John Anastasiadis, with Yarraville old boy and club stalwart Eric Nikoliadis recently being appointed President with the flamboyant John Amanatidis his Vice President.

Yarraville are confident they'll speedily return to State League 1 and boast a terrific junior program. Yarraville have produced a plethora of NSL and European players including John Anastasiadis, Dean Anastasiadis, Bill Damianos, and Con Giatis.

Victorian Derby

The second Victorian derby takes place at Sommers Street, Sunshine at 6:00pm on Sunday.

Gates will open early, at 4:30pm with additional car parking being provided by the Knights. There will be over 1,000 cap parking spaces available in the ground as well as considerable Street parking.

Over the last few years many fans missed the opening given lengthy delays at the gate so fans should take advantage of the early opening by arriving early for what will certainly be another epic Victorian Derby.

Last seasons Sunshine game saw a red card (Panopolous) and a remarkable late goal from Massimo Murococa giving South the points. It'll be Mirko Bazics first game back at Sommers Street with both teams needing the win to secure a finals spot.

Transfer News

Despite the expectation the Victorian Clubs will bypass the transfer period, some significant and surprising activity is occurring off the park.

Next week ABSW will report on a former Soceroos (not Paul Trimboli) departure this week from his Victorian NSL Club.

And we assume young Poutakitis, a left sided midfielder from State League team Port Melbourne will probably sign with the lakeside club.

Poutakitis is one of several hopefuls currently trialing with South Melbourne.

Boutsli Oakleigh Deal Off

Yet another story about Victorians "homeless" striker Con Boutslianis.

His on again, off again move to State League team Oakleigh is said to be in jeopardy.

Oakleigh are understood to have reached generous personal terms with the former South forward but other off field staffing requirements made by Boutslianis are supposedly jeopardising his high profile move to the Eastern Suburbs team.

Farina slams media interviews

Australia coach Frank Farina has slammed a series of interviews with his Socceroos on Australian television channel, SBS.

Farina believes SBS, which will televise this week's game against England, was trying to "turn national team players against each other".

He told the Australian, "To be honest, I was angry, upset and disappointed with what I heard and saw the other day."

"The sort of questions being put to the likes of Paul Okon and Joey

Didulica were, I think, out of order.

"The guys handled themselves well but I am not happy that they were put into an uncomfortable position."

"I find this latest situation hard to digest after all the positives of the last couple of weeks."

"We are starting to reap enormous goodwill and publicity through the game with England and the recent announcements of a series of terrific sponsorships, then we get people who want to focus on negatives."



Frank Farina.

Gerrard misses Socceroos

Liverpool midfielder Steven Gerrard has received his expected three-match ban from the Football Association for a two-footed lunge on Everton's Gary Naysmith in December's Merseyside derby.

The 22-year-old was not fined but missed Thursday's FA Cup replay with Crystal Palace and the Premiership matches with Middlesbrough and Birmingham.

He is also out of the England friendly with Australia at Upton Park.

Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier was furious at the treatment meted out to his player, who has stormed back to form of late and scored a fine goal in the 3-0 win over West Ham on Sunday.

"I'm disappointed," Houllier said after the hearing in Bolton.

"I stand by what I said before that it was a mis-timed tackle and not malicious, even Everton manager David Moyes accepted that."

"If I had had the slightest hint that it was malicious I would not have come to the hearing," added the Frenchman.

Gerrard was convicted on video evidence as referee Graham



England star midfielder Steven Gerrard will miss the Australian clash due to suspension

Poll neither sent off Gerrard nor booked the player because he did not see the incident.

Gerrard formally denied a charge of violent conduct against the Scottish international.

The upside to his ban is he will be eligible for the two legs of the UEFA Cup tie against French side Auxerre as well as the League Cup Final against Manchester United on March 2.

Gerrard has apologised to Naysmith as well as Moyes, and insisted he would "never go out to deliberately hurt an opponent".

Liverpool, who requested a personal hearing, had hoped Gerrard's rash moment will not be viewed in isolation and that a generally decent disciplinary record works in the player's favour.

Since making his debut against Blackburn Rovers, in November 1998, Gerrard has been sent off three times and has averaged a yellow card every eight games in his 178 matches.

His first dismissal came on September 27, 1999 in his first Merseyside derby after a collision with Kevin Campbell.

AJAX: Didulica is leaving

Dutch giants Ajax have confirmed that Aussie goalkeeper Joey Didulica will leave the club when his contract expires at the end of the season.

Didulica, who joined Ajax from National Soccer League club Melbourne Knights in 1999, failed to agree to an improved contract offer and has decided to bide his time until the end of the season when he can move for free.

Speaking on SBS' TheWorldGame TV program earlier this month, Didulica hinted that he was flattered by the interest from a number of European clubs that have inquired about his availability. "It is tempting to leave with a lot of interest around Europe," Didulica said.

In confirming that Ajax did put an offer on the table, Didulica dismissed reports that it was to the tune of \$700,000-per-season for four more years while insisting that he does have plenty of options.

"There is an offer but it's definitely not that," he said. "There's



Aussie keeper Joe Didulica will leave Dutch giants Ajax at the end of this season.

been talk from around Europe - from Spain to Austria and France." "Financially, we haven't spoken to those clubs."

After being loaned out for the 2001-2 season to Ajax's feeder club in Belgium, Germinal Beerschot Antwerpen, Didulica has returned to feature prominently in the first team this season although a few niggling injuries have prevented him from cementing his place.

Didulica has been in impressive form in both the Dutch first division and the UEFA Champions League since making his debut on December 15, 2001. So far he has played in 16 games in the Netherlands and four Champions League matches.

His most notable performance must certainly be the Champions League clash with Valencia in late November.

In front of a hostile crowd at the intimidating Mestalla Stadium, Didulica almost single-handedly stopped the Spanish champions as Ajax came within a whisker of earning a priceless away win before Miguel Angel Angulo snatched a last-minute equaliser for Valencia in a 1-1 draw.

Kewell commits to Leeds

Leeds manager Terry Venables confirmed last week that he is prepared to fight on as the club's manager.

And the former England coach has received two pieces of good news, with Harry Kewell and Alan Smith insisting they are not looking to leave.

Venables had considered walking out of Elland Road following the £9million (\$A25.2million) sale of Jonathan Woodgate to Newcastle, saying he had been "kept in the dark".

However, before Sunday's training session, Venables told his players he intended to stay until the end of the season.

In a statement to the Yorkshire Post Venables said: "I called the players and backroom staff together on Sunday and told them that I wanted to stay."

And the former England coach

has urged all at the club "to be very responsible and act like men" following his decision to remain at the helm.

For the sake of the team, and realising his exit would only serve as "another blow" to the players, Venables has chosen to continue until the end of the season at least.

Venables has spoken about building bridges with chairman Peter Ridsdale after the former England coach felt he was left in the dark over Woodgate's transfer.

Venables was eager to end the speculation regarding his future to ease the minds of the players who effectively played in Saturday's 2-0 defeat at Everton in a state of limbo.

He feels they too can now move on as he added: "On the coach back I told the players I wanted them in for a meeting and on Sunday we came in and I had a chat with them."

"It's been as hard for the group as I have ever known. It's not just that a player or two has gone, you are talking about good players and good friends because they are quite a strong group who have been through a lot."

"They were a bit down, but then so was everyone. But they're fine now. We've talked it through and talked about what's necessary and about what we are here to do."

"We all have setbacks, but there's one option and that's to look forward and now we owe it to the supporters to get ourselves up because we've a massive job to do."

Venables spoke after Smith's representative Alex Black told The Sun: "Alan is happy at Leeds and wants to stay."

"Provided we can come to the right agreement he will sign a new contract."

And Kewell also looks set to remain at Elland Road despite the recent fire sale at the club.

Reports that the Australian international, who has another 18 months to run on his present contract, wants out given the turmoil at the club have been dismissed by his agent Bernie Mandic.

"Harry is not looking to move anywhere," said Mandic.

"What has happened [at Leeds] is not something I am concerned about and Harry has not voiced his concerns."



Harry Kewell

"As a team unit, everything is fine there and I have not heard anything to the contrary. The situation is between Peter [Ridsdale] and Terry [Venables]."

"Harry still wants to stay at Leeds. He is having a very good season there so why would he want to leave?"

"And contrary to some reports Leeds wanted to sell him, they have never indicated that to me nor to Harry."

With Kewell currently Leeds' top scorer this season with 11 goals, and a player who has consistently received admiring glances from clubs on the Continent, Leeds may yet cash in on the 24-year-old this summer if Ridsdale is not true to his word.

Ridsdale has stated, following Woodgate's shock departure to Newcastle, financially Leeds are now healthy and they can begin the process of rebuilding.

Supporters, though, will be anxious when the transfer window re-opens again at the end of the season if Kewell and Smith have not put pen to paper by then.

But Mandic has stated there is no rush as he added: "There's no intensive negotiations on either side."

"But we do have an understanding that we will sit down at some point to discuss the future. That's how casual it is at the moment."

Trimboli knee angst

South Melbourne skipper Paul Trimboli could miss the rest of the National Soccer League season with a knee injury suffered in last weekend's loss at Olympic Sharks.

MRI scans will reveal the extent of the damage although South coach Danny Wright is prepared for the worst.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed, but the best-case scenario is six to eight weeks, the worst case would be a knee reconstruction," Wright told the Herald Sun.

The 400-game plus veteran was injured in the 15th minute of play on Sunday when Sharks midfielder Andrew Packer fell on him and will consult knee specialist David Young to confirm the extent of the injury.

"There is some damage but there is no point guessing at this stage. I went 15 years with nothing, now it's starting to pile up," said Trimboli who faces a third spell on the sidelines this campaign.

"I wasn't even tackling. There were two guys jostling for the ball and I was getting to the scene when the player (Packer) tripped or was pushed and he fell across my leg."

A month ago the Bob Jane Stadium side was the hottest team in the NSL but with just one point from its past three matches it is in danger



Paul Trimboli could miss the rest of the NSL season due to a knee injury suffered against the Sharks a few weeks back.

of missing the top six finals series.

Although it remains fourth - just five points ahead of seventh placed Wollongong - South has a miserable away record that could prove

costly as it has to travel four times in its last six games.

"We need to be clear as a group that our spot in the top six is at risk," Wright said.

"It's not that we're playing badly but now it's crucial that the squad gets the job done and makes sure of getting us into the finals."

Add to this the loss through injury of Robert Liparoti and the upcoming absence of Vaughan Coveny, Vince Lia, Michael Baird and Massimo Murococa due to international duty during March, and South will do well to stay in contention for the title.

As well as sweating on Trimboli's prognosis, veteran Fausto De Amicis has been hampered by travel-related migraines and may be overlooked for away fixtures.

The four-time NSL championship winning defender was expected to play against Olympic but withdrew at the last minute, forcing Wright to change his tactics.

"We had to rejig our team and they swamped us in the first five minutes (scoring after two minutes)," Wright confirmed.

"We'll be speaking to the medical staff and sitting down with Fausto to discuss the situation."

"It's not his fault but we can't afford to let it happen again. It's too big a risk in a big game."

Don't write off Tiatto

Socceroos firebrand Danny Tiatto has pleaded with national team boss Frank Farina to leave the door open for a possible call-up for the friendly against England at Upton Park.

The Manchester City ace was left out of Farina's 18-man squad for the February 13 (AEDT) clash because of a stomach muscle injury that has seen him sidelined since Boxing Day - although he has just got back on the training paddock last week.

He told The Daily Telegraph that he was optimistic about his chances.

"There's still a bit of hope for me and I'll fight all the way



Danny Tiatto: The fiery midfielder has not given up on a Socceroo spot.

because I'd love to play in both matches. I know time is against me but I certainly haven't given up."

If Tiatto fails in his attempt, Birmingham's Stan Lazaridis is expected to start against England but he will be pushed all the way by FC Basel's Scott Chipperfield.

One player who has done enough to earn a starting berth for the Socceroos is Blackburn's Lucas Neill.

Despite playing most of the season at right back for Rovers, the versatile defender is expected to line up at left back.

"This is long overdue for me," a relieved Neill said.

Purdue resigns with the Blue Devils

By Graham Cooke

Midfielder Nic Purdue has resigned for Belconnen Blue Devils after a stint in Iceland with KR Reykjavik.

Late last week the club was still seeking a clearance from the Icelanders, who are in the middle of their

off-season.

A Blue Devils spokesman said Purdue had agreed to terms and it was just a matter of waiting for an answer from Reykjavik.

"Nic has been training with us for the past six weeks, but it's a long time since he played a competitive match, so he'll probably start with a run in the youth

side," the spokesman said.

Devils coach Lino Fiorese said the former Canberra Cosmos player's experience in the National Soccer League and Iceland would be invaluable as the team struggled to improve its league position in the second half of the season.

Purdue played 12 games (11 starts) last season before leaving to play overseas.



SPEEDSTAR FREEMAN VISITS VIS

One of Australia's greatest ever sporting athletes Cathy Freeman recently made a special visit to the South Yarra Sports Centre.

The event was the VIS Soccer Program inductions in which Freeman was a special guest accompanied by her coach Peter Fortune.

The VIS for a long time now has developed many quality young soccer stars that are currently making a big name for themselves either in Australia or abroad.

Coach Ernie Merrick was quite pleased with this season's squad after three of his players were selected for this year's U17 Joey's squad.

Evan Karavitis, Kristian Sarkies and Adrian Leijer were the VIS stars selected in Ange Postecoglou's squad who



VIS graduates Evan Karavitis, Kristian Sarkies and Adrian Leijer shown with track star Cathy Freeman.

departed for the Sunshine Coast Last Monday bound for a successful Oceania qualifiers.

Other notable attendees on the day were VIS Program Manager - Peter Spence,

Victorian Soccer Federation Commissioner - Tony Dunkerley, Program Sponsor representatives - Jane Brook [Snickers] and Jim Tansey [adidas].

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Skipper Upbeat - The Wollongong Wolves are somewhat on high especially in recent weeks as the club has turned in some fantastic results.

Winning the remaining five matches in the NSL will be the aim of what coach Ron Corry will be taking on board with him as the weeks go by.

Having gone through a transitional change this season the Wolves will be up against this week as they entertain the Glory.

Certainly no push over side, the Glory have a number of quality players and have been playing some great football of late.

A big crowd is expected for this match as one of Australia's greatest clubs takes on the might of the Wolves.

Even though a spot in this year's finals is totally out of the question, gaining a reputable finish is what the club is aiming for.

Here's to a grand finishing for the Wollongong boys.

Premier League Club's Dilemma - Lysaght Soccer club has with-

drawn from playing in the 2003 ISA competitions, Premier or Conference League. Various circumstances forced the new committee to make this difficult decision, still remaining a financial member of the Association with the intent to join playing again in the 2004 soccer season.

The reasons for pulling out this year have been sufficiently discussed and published.

Lysaght Soccer club originated in the early 1970's as a company soccer team, using the Lysaght Company owned sports oval, originally located opposite the company factory and later relocated to Figtree Leisure Centre which is being developed by new owners into a brand-new Wollongong Sports Centre.

Looking through the available records Lysaght Soccer club's name turns up 1978 as second division league champion and grand final winner, 1988 first division first grade grand final winners, 1980 Reserve Grade first division league champion, 1983 Youth Grade first division grand final winner, 1995 club championship first division and also 1995 Player of the year in Phil Matias, 1997 leading

goal scorer Anthony Guido, 1997 Premier League champion and grand final winner, 1995 and 1996 both Premier League Reserve Grade champion and Grand final winner, 1992 and 1993 Premier League youth grade champion and grand final winner, also in 1998 and 1999 and 2001 - an outstanding record in club history.

Prominent soccer personalities coached at Lysaght like Casey De Bruin 1995 and 1996, Warwick Young 1998 and 1999, Phil Matias 1997 and 2000, Rob Birkin 2001 and 2002 and many others need to mention.



The Lysaght Soccer Club has developed numerous quality soccer players over the years, eagerly snapped up now by other clubs.

Premier League Structure - Balgownie Rangers have been invited and accepted back to take Lysaght's place in the competition.

The competition consists of 12 clubs while the conference league competes with 15 teams for the time being, operating with a bye. The draw has to be reorganised, mainly for the last seven rounds now that Balgownie moves one up.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE 2002/03

NORTHERN DIVISION RESULTS - ROUND 21

FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2003

Newcastle United 0 AIS 3
(Anstey 34/75', Nedeljkovic 52')

SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2003

Northern Spirit 1 Wollongong Wolves 1
(Baveas 76') (Majurovski 62')

Canberra Deakin 3 Marconi Stallions 2
(Lee 26/87', Pideski 48') (Mengi 45', Grenell 55')

SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2003

Sydney United 2 Olympic Sharks 0
(Simic 09/45')

QAS 0 Parramatta Power 9
(R. Cardozo 40/43', Langdon 46', Bridge 53/55', Brownlie 64/70/80', Younis 88')

LEAGUE LADDER - ROUND 21

Team	P	W	D	L	S	F	A	Pts.
1. AIS	16	11	3	2	W8	32	14	36

2. Canberra Deakin	19	9	5	5	W1	49	31	32
3. Parramatta Power	16	9	3	4	W1	47	25	30
4. Wollongong Wolves	18	7	7	4	D1	41	28	28
5. Newcastle United	18	7	6	5	L1	31	27	27
6. Northern Spirit	16	7	5	4	D1	17	11	26
7. Sydney United	16	6	4	6	W1	34	24	22
8. Olympic Sharks	18	5	7	6	L1	26	22	22
9. ACTAS	16	5	4	7	D1	27	37	19
10. Marconi Stallions	16	4	4	8	L1	19	38	16
11. QAS	18	4	3	11	L3	19	49	15
12. Marconi Mustangs	15	0	3	12	L4	6	42	3

FIXTURE - ROUND 22

Parramatta Power v Canberra Deakin

AIS v ACTAS

Wollongong Wolves v Marconi Mustangs

Olympic Sharks v Northern Spirit

Marconi Stallions v Newcastle United

PREMIERSHIP BIZZARIO

Nige and Fergy here from BananaTV's Premiership Bizarrio. Every week we're going to give you our views and opinions on what's going on, and off, in the English Premiership.

There's plenty of awards to hand out this week:

The Rusty Tin Boot Award goes to Michael Proctor. He really showed Kevin Phillips and Co how to hit the back of the net. 2 goals in 3 minutes would have only put him 5 goals behind top scorer Torre Andre Flo...except these were in his own net. Now that is prolific!

The Goal Celebration of the Week Award goes to a player who didn't score and wasn't even on the pitch. Oldham's Darren Sheridan jumped up to celebrate the equalizer against Crewe, scoring himself on the roof of the dugout, resulting in concussion and whiplash. Oldham lost 3-1.

The Sporting Dumbo Award goes to Denmark's Morten Wieghorst playing in the Carlsberg International Cup. An Iranian

defender mistakenly picked up the ball after thinking he heard the ref's whistle.

Unfortunately for him someone in the crowd also had a whistle and it was that he heard.

Wieghorst strolled up to take the penalty and made a complete balls up of it.

His excuse later was that it was unfair to take advantage of the situation. What a lying sod. Stop trying to sound philanthropic and just admit you're crap at taking penalties. Denmark lost 1-0.

Resourcefulness of the Week Award goes to Racing Santander's new President Dimitri Piterman. After being refused permission to sit on the bench because of his lack of qualifications (ie a coaching certificate), Piterman applied for a press pass.

This way he could get even closer to the pitch to bark out instructions to his charges.

Finally, Quote of the Week

Award reflects Gerard Houllier's current state of mind with Liverpool's slump in form.

In his pre-match pep talk before the FA Cup tie against Crystal



Premiership Bizarrio

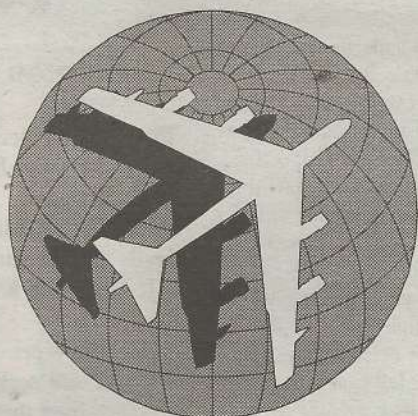
Palace he told his troops "If the game is on TV, it's not your good luck, it's because people expect a cup upset".

Look out for this weeks show where our punting expert Derek will lend a helping hand to Michael "Owin" everyone" to help get some of his cash back.

See you next week. Premiership Bizarrio

To catch Nige and Fergy on Premiership Bizarrio, their internet TV show, go to www.bananatv.com

And click on Premiership Soccer. New episodes added each week. Don't miss it.



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NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

After Round 21	TOTAL							PTS	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	BYE	F	A		P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
OLYMPIC SHARKS	20	13	3	4	1	40	25	42	10	9	0	1	20	6	10	5	2	3	15	10
PERTH GLORY	19	13	2	4	1	37	17	41	10	9	0	1	25	6	9	4	3	2	19	17
NEWCASTLE UNITED	20	8	6	6	1	31	22	30	10	6	3	1	21	8	10	2	3	5	9	13
PARRAMATTA POWER	19	8	4	7	2	34	22	28	10	5	2	2	21	11	9	3	2	4	12	11
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	19	8	4	7	2	33	26	28	9	4	3	2	17	11	10	4	1	5	16	15
SOUTH MELBOURNE	18	8	4	6	2	27	26	28	11	7	3	1	21	10	7	1	1	5	4	13
NORTHERN SPIRIT	18	7	3	8	2	23	31	24	8	4	1	3	11	11	12	3	1	8	9	20
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	20	5	8	7	1	22	28	23	9	3	5	1	10	9	11	2	3	6	12	19
BRISBANE STRIKERS	20	6	4	10	1	33	40	22	10	3	1	6	15	23	10	3	3	4	18	19
FOOTBALL KINGZ	19	5	6	8	1	19	26	21	9	2	5	2	9	10	10	3	1	6	11	16
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	19	5	6	8	2	33	43	21	10	4	2	4	17	23	9	1	4	4	16	20
SYDNEY UNITED	19	5	5	9	2	17	26	20	10	5	3	2	12	9	9	0	2	7	5	17
MARCONI STALLIONS	19	5	3	11	2	19	36	18	8	3	1	4	11	13	11	2	2	7	8	23

FOOTBALL KINGZ

0

MARCONI STALLIONS

0

Referee: Con Diomis. Crowd: 3,148. Venue: Ericsson Stadium.

Teams: FOOTBALL KINGZ: Utting, Perry, Almendra, Vlahos, Ngata, deGregorio, Pritchett (Campbell 70'), Bekham (Burton 46'), Christie (Turner 84'), Donoso, Anthopoulos.

Subs Not Used: Townsend (gk).

MARCONI STALLIONS: Turnbull, Gibson, Webb, Costanzo, Longo, McDonald, Spiteri, Brosque, Last (Cassidy 61'), Sekulic, Thwaite.

Subs Not Used: Care, Cotte, Alogdelis (gk).

Cautions: J Christie (FK) 3', G Last (MS) 35', M Thwaite (MS) 80'.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

1

(P Tsekenis 31')

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

1

(G Biscayzacu pen 50')

Referee: M. Breeze. Crowd: 6,832. Venue: EnergyAustralia Stadium.

Teams: NEWCASTLE UNITED: Beltrame, Thomas, Bingley, Dodd, Wilson (Johnson 83'), J Griffiths (Masi 26'), Tsekenis, R Griffiths, Schirripa, Middleby, Eagleton.

Subs Not Used: Hughes, Willis (gk).

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: John, Piorkowski, Vargas, Kovacic (Natsioulas 46'), Rocco, Sabljak, Erdogan, Fa'arodo, Buljubasic, Biscayzacu, Lapsansky.

Subs Not Used: Horvat, Batinovic, Hrehoresin (gk).

Cautions: M Bingley (NU) 73', M Johnson (NU) 79', R Griffiths (NU) 83', I Erdogan (MK) 65', M John (MK) 79'.

NORTHERN SPIRIT

3

(B Groves 20', S Petrie 79', A McDermott 85')

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

0

Referee: Simon Micallef. Crowd: 3,114. Venue: North Sydney Oval.

Teams: NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson, Watts, Tobin, McDermott, Ferguson (Richter 79'), Macallister (Kwasnik 69'), Hutchinson, Groves, Tomasevic, Petrie (Fisher 83'), Wilkinson.

Subs Not Used: Rex (gk).

WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Crews, Austin (Heffernan 46'), Stanton, Cervinski, Castro (Sekulovski 46'), Lyons, Young (Wells 53'), Farah, Huxley, Mennillo, Blake.

Subs Not Used: Whalan (gk).

SYDNEY UNITED

1

(A Doumanis 87')

OLYMPIC SHARKS

1

(A Milicic 36')

Referee: Eddie Lennie. Crowd: 3,65. Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre.

Teams: SYDNEY UNITED: Ivesa, Cacic, Pavic, Barrett, Jedinak (Bilokapic 65'), Babic, Collina, Brain (Cunico 69'), Menapi (Deur 61'), Doumanis, Rudan.

Subs Not Used: Perosh (gk).

OLYMPIC SHARKS: Bolton, Juric, Srohoj, Pondeljak, Milicic (Souris 70'), North, Harris, Porter (Parisi 65'), Packer, Durante (Caravella 70'), Ishida.

Subs Not Used: Hughes (gk).

Cautions: D Barrett (SU) 49', B Pavic (SU) 53', M Rudan (SU) 70', A Packer (OS) 73'.

BRISBANE STRIKERS

3

(J McKain 40', A Roche 46', F Tagawa 64')

BRISBANE POWER

0

(A Vlahos 48', H Ngata 83')

Referee: Angelo Nardi. Crowd: 1,398. Venue: Ballymore Stadium.

Teams: BRISBANE STRIKERS: Kearton (Baldock 76'), Stefanutto, McKain, McLaren, Grierson (McKay 70'), Rech, Webber, Pilic, Heath, Roche (Rose 76'), Tagawa.

Subs Not Used: Dreger.

PARRAMATTA POWER: Reddy, Ceccoli, Orlic, Beauchamp, O'Sullivan (Thompson 76'), Maloney, Salapasis (Brown 66'), Zorbas (Cardozo 54'), Buonavoglia, Renaud, Elrich.

Subs Not Used: Vukovic (gk).

Cautions: A Webber (BS) 25', A Ceccoli (PP) 38'.

SOUTH MELBOURNE

1

(S Pace 91')

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

2

(S Tunbridge 20', L Pantelis 79')

Referee: Mark Shield. Crowd: 4,050. Venue: Bob Jane Stadium.

Teams: SOUTH MELBOURNE: Galekovic, Iosifidis, Durakovic, Panopoulos, Buljan, Sekulovski (Pace 70'), Lia, Murdocca (Susa 58'), Baird, Kisorbo, Damianos.

Subs Not Used: Tolios, Anastasiadis (gk).

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Acevski, Fyfe, Kovacevic, Pantelis, Veart, Vidmar, Lozanovski (Lagati 83'), Tunbridge, Kemp, Pelosi, Agiero (Terminello 67').

Subs Not Used: Smeltz, Scarsella (gk).

Cautions: M Baird (SM) 23', P Kisorbo (SM) 24', M Durakovic (SM) 79', S Iosifidis (SM) 79'.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK



ANTHONY DOUMANIS (Sydney United)

Scoring a goal against your former club is always a big achievement and that was the case for 21-year-old attacking midfielder Anthony Doumanis.

Dumped by the Olympic Sharks last season young Anthony played an instrumental role in Sydney United's one-all draw with last season's champions.

The former Joey waited till the 87th minute when he knocked in a goal that sent the home crowd in a spin with a hard earned point at the Sydney United Sports Centre.

Playing like a man possessed the attacking midfielder was everywhere creating havoc for his former side with a brilliant performance on and off the ball. Now with Gabriel 'Chi Chi' Mendez gone to Malaysian club Johor, Doumanis will assume the role as the little master in the midfield.

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
GRIFFITHS Joel	Newcastle United	14
MORI Damian	Perth Glory	14
ROCHE Anthony	Brisbane Strikers	10
BUONAVOGLIA John	Parra: Power	9
PELIKAN Anthony	Melbourne Knights	9
YOUNG Stuart	Wollongong Wolves	9
BROSQUE Alex	Marconi Stallions	8
MILICIC Ante	Olympic Sharks	8

BYE - PERTH GLORY



Photos by
Carlos Furtado



A.P.I.A. -Leichhardt In Viareggio, Italy



A.P.I.A. -LEICH-HARDT TIGERS' Youth Squad last Saturday afternoon flew out of Sydney's international airport on Singapore's flight to Rome, as they embark on their second consecutive Italian crusade to participate in the 55th Viareggio Youth Tournament.

Apia's Captain.

For A.P.I.A.'s captain and central-midfielder Nathan Foti, it will also be his second crusade to Viareggio, having already competed in last year's Tournament along with four other team-mates of this travelling squad.

The phlegmatic Foti stated to ABSW:

"This Viareggio tour unquestionably is the highlight of any Youth player's career. It's an honour to play at an Viareggio Tournament.

"I played in the Gothia Cup in Sweden back in 1998 and can assure you that the Viareggio Tournament is of a much higher standard.

"There's just no comparison in standard whatsoever. At Viareggio you are faced with such powerful Tournament opposition playing against giant club sides of the calibre of the two Milans, Lazio, Bayern Munich, Fiorentina, Empoli, Torino, Juventus, Ajax etc."

Now that he's far more experienced, Foti went on to elaborate: "Having played at Viareggio last year, I now know what to expect.

"I now know how difficult it is to win a game against these young fulltime European professionals.

"Our squad this year contains five players that went to Italy last year. These five, (myself included), have now that experience.

"But having said this, the rest of our squad is much younger and have no idea what to expect. They are just excited that they are going into an international tournament.

"I sincerely hope that once the Viareggio

Special Feature From Viareggio, Italy.

By John Economos

Tournament kicks off, our younger inexperienced players will be struck by the atmosphere plus the enormity of the Tournament.

"Hopefully this will automatically lift our effort levels," envisaged Foti.

Over recent years this testing Tournament has expanded to now embrace 40 major club Youth teams, attracting entrants from as far as Australia, Argentina, Brasil, Costa Rica, Germany, Greece, Holland, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, the U.S.A., Yugoslavia, plus needless to say, Italy.

Apia In Group 2.

Split into Ten Groups, each comprising four teams, the top two clubs at the completion of Phase 1 go

through to a knock-out Phase 11.



NATHON FOTI:
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt's captain.

In this year's Tournament the A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers (Australia) have been drawn into Group 2, alongside very competitive Italian Youth teams from Cosenza, Napoli and Reggina.

The Tournament kicks off early next week.

The 'Centro Giovani

Calciatori', (the Italian Tournament organisers), have scheduled A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt's first clash against Cosenza next Tuesday (18th February), to be played at Arezzo 220 kilometres out of Viareggio.

Apia's second Group match is set down for Thursday week, (20th February), against Reggina to be played at Empoli's Training Head Quarters 80 kilometres out of Viareggio.

The Sydney team's last match of Phase 1 is against Napoli, (Maradona's old club), on Saturday week, (22nd February), played in Sienna, a beautiful city some 200 kilometres out of Viareggio.

The Tournament concludes with the Final played inside the Viareggio Main Stadium, Stadio dei Pini, on March 3rd.

Leading into the Tournament, A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt officials have blue-printed five trial matches to date, of which already three have been confirmed.

The A.P.I.A. Youth Squad

last week was bolstered when Technical Director John Romeo added a Liberian striker from Western Australia, the 19-year-old Bioma Karpeh.

A.P.I.A.'s first trial match early this week is against Brazilian outfit Santos, (Pele's old club), who have been bracketed in Group 1 alongside Fiorentina, Juventus and Parma.

Later in the week as teams arrive into the City of Viareggio, another two games against crack Italian Primavera clubs, Empoli and Pistoiese, have been lined up as warm-up matches for A.P.I.A.'s Youth team.

Last Sunday afternoon the A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt squad filed into Rome's mega Olympic Stadium to watch the Serie A clash, Lazio vs Torino which ended 1-1 draw.

Lazio opened the scored from a corner when Argentinian World Cup midfielder Diego Simeone headed into the target in the 30th second minute.

In second half the tenacious Torino finally equalised when from a goal mouth scramble.



BOIMA KARPEH:
Liberian striker from W.A.

Marco Serrante the striker scored from inside the sixth yard box, to give Torino a well deserved draw at Rome's Olympic Stadium.

Torino's well disciplined formation soaked up all the Lazio pressure that the home side launch.

The A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers squad thorough enjoy the electrifying atmosphere.

55TH "TORNEO MONDIALE DI CALCIO "COPPA CARNEVALE 2003"

YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNER-UP	YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNER-UP
1949	MILAN	Lazio	1977	SAMPDORIA	Milan
1950	SAMPDORIA	Roma	1978	FIorentina	Roma
1951	PARTIZAN	Sampdoria	1979	FIorentina	Perugia
1952	MILAN	Partizan	1980	DUKLA PRAGUE	Lazio
1953	MILAN	Juventus	1981	ROMA	Ipswich Town
1954	LAN. VICENZA	Juventus	1982	FIorentina	Inter Milan
1955	LAN. VICENZA	Sampdoria	1983	ROMA	Inter Milan
1956	SPARTAK PRAGA	Milan	1984	TORINO	Napoli
1957	MILAN	Roma	1985	TORINO	Roma
1958	SAMPDORIA	Fiorentina	1986	INTER MILAN	Sampdoria
1959	MILAN	Partizan	1987	TORINO	Fiorentina
1960	MILAN	Dukia Prague	1988	FIorentina	Torino
1961	JUVENTUS	Lan. Vicenza	1989	TORINO	Roma
1962	INTER MILAN	Fiorentina	1990	CESENA	Napoli
1963	SAMPDORIA	Bologna	1991	ROMA	Napoli
1964	DUKLA PRAGUE	Bologna	1992	FIorentina	Roma
1965	GENOA	Juventus	1993	ATALANTA	Milan
1966	FIorentina	Dukia Prague	1994	JUVENTUS	Fiorentina
1967	BOLOGNA	Fiorentina	1995	TORINO	Fiorentina
1968	DUKLA PRAGUE	Juventus	1996	BRESCIA	Parma
1969	ATALANTA	Napoli	1997	BARI	Torino
1970	DUKLA PRAGUE	Milan	1998	TORINO	Iriney
1971	INTER MILAN	Milan	1999	MILAN	Varteks
1972	DUKLA PRAGUE	Inter Milan	2000	EMPOLI	Fiorentina
1973	FIorentina	Bologna	2001	MILAN	Vitoria
1974	FIorentina	Lazio	2002	INTER MILAN	Torino
1975	NAPOLI	Lazio	2003	??	??
1976	DUKLA PRAGUE	Milan			

A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers Football Club Empoli Youth Academy



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The above Club is seeking expressions of interest for A.P.I.A.-Empoli Academy squad which competes in the Under 20 NSW Premier League Competition.

Currently this squad is in Italy participating in the prestigious 55th Annual consecutive Viareggio Tournament.

As such A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt invites written interest from committed and technically gifted players who have aspirations to succeed in a football career to submit detailed resumes of their previous and current experience.

The 2003-2004 squad will commence training and preparation starting in early May 2003.

For further info phone 0412 808 114, and address all correspondence to:-

Academy Coaching Director

John Romeo

PO Box 680, BURWOOD NSW 1805

GROUP 1

JUVENTUS
PARMA
FIorentina
SANTOS

GROUP 2

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT
COSENZA
NAPOLI
REGGINA

GROUP 3

ROMA
PAOK SALONIKI
(GREECE)
CITTADILLA
CORDOBA

GROUP 4

BRESCIA
VOJVODINA
(YUGOSLAVIA)
ASCOLI
IRINEU

GROUP 5

INTER MILAN
BAYERN MUNICH
TERNANA
VITORIA

GROUP 6

MILAN
LAZIO
CATANIA
COSTA RICA
UNITED

GROUP 7

TORINO
SLAVIA PRAHA
SALERINITANA
NEW YORK

GROUP 8

VICENZA
OBILIC
BENEVENTO
DESP. CAPIXABA

GROUP 9

BARI
GRASSHOPPER
BRINDISI
C.N. MARCILIO
DIAS

GROUP 10

EMPOLI
PERUGIA
PALERMO
PUMAS



NSL Rescheduled Match (Rd 13)



Northern Spirit	2
Parramatta Power	1

Parramatta Power may have been gifted three points by Soccer Australia during the week but Northern Spirit weren't prepared to match the hand-out, downing the visitors at North Sydney Oval last Wednesday night.

The Power had lost a round one national soccer league match to Perth but received the equivalent of a 3-0 win yesterday when SA deemed Glory to have used an unregistered player during the match.

It was the shot in the arm

Parramatta needed to cement their spot in the top six but tonight the Power backed it up by shooting itself in the foot.

The Spirit, second from the bottom, should have been ripe for the plucking coming off a Saturday loss to the Glory in Perth and without the services of veteran defender Alex Tobin, a late withdrawal with a groin injury.

But the Power, coming off the bye and without a loss in four games before that, showed they have a long way to go to be competitive in the finals

series.

Spirit dominated play from early in the game and were a decent header away from a goal after just three minutes.

Adam Kwasnik, who let that opportunity slide, made no mistake with the second 17 minutes later as he headed home a superb cross from fellow striker Stewart Petrie.

The Power were well held by a stacked Spirit defence which continually caught Parramatta with the offside trap, only midfielder Peter Zorbas presenting any problems with half chances

in the 38th and 39th minutes.

Power looked to have more legs in the second half but when keeper Liam Reddy took Dylan Macallister out in the square just six minutes in, the visitors found themselves staring at a two goal deficit.

Vuko Tomasevic drove the penalty shot low and wide and the Spirit doubled their lead.

Replacement Pablo Cardozo dragged one back off a goal-keeping error from Paul Henderson in the 68th minute but that was as good as it got for the Power, who looked to be off their game most of the night.

The win lifts the Spirit from 13th to eighth on the NSL table and, with a game in hand, they find themselves with an outside chance of cracking the final six.



Spirit youngster Adam Kwasnik gifted the Spirit a goal with a well-taken header in the first half.

From The Dressing Sheds

By Mark Stavroulakis

The Parramatta Power were last week granted with a huge bonus in their plight to gain a top six entry for the first time in its four-year history since its induction into the NSL.

Soccer Australia came to the conclusion last week that Perth Glory did breach rules and regulations in fielding an unregistered player (Andre Gumprecht) during their Round 1 clash in Sydney.

The ramifications were simple, the Glory were docked three points and fined \$5000, while the Power picked up the three valuable points.

Coach Nick Theodorakopoulos however stated to ABSW that the side was not counting on these points and that their plans of playing well week in week out did not change.

"To tell you the truth the boys and myself did not

count on the points so much but after receiving them it was an added bonus. We got on with business as usual and played more of a low key affair with this situation but now that its all over we can think more of finishing in the top six which is our main aim".

While things were all smooth sailing for the club, last Wednesday night they were brought back to reality when Lawrie McKinna's men got one over his former squad with a two-one win at North Sydney Oval.

A rescheduled match from Round 13 the Spirit had former Power player Adam Kwasnik and Vuko Tomasevic to thank as they grabbed all three points while the Power were left wondering what could have been a huge week for the side.

-During last Wednesday's re-scheduled match at North Sydney Oval, a crowd of

1,850 was announced over the speakers.

With all seriousness, there would have been around 500 people who witnessed the Spirit-Power match.

North Sydney Oval has certainly turned into a Ghost Town and its quite unfortunate as the side currently fields one of the best crop of youngsters in the NSL.

-Its been reported that a 'certain' Sydney club currently owes its players four weeks wages plus bonuses. In an alarming report the players have yet to receive anything and its been alleged that if nothing is done about this situation, things could get ugly - stay tuned!

-Getting booed from a certain set of supporters is always an unpleasant aspect for any soccer player in the world.

Well spare a thought for Parramatta Power striker Pablo Cardozo.

The silky striker has not one but two clubs booing him when he makes his appearance on the pitch.

Former clubs the Olympic Sharks and Northern Spirit are the culprits towards the Cardozo bashing, but I guess he lets the football do all the talking as already this season, 'Pabz' has scored a goal against both sides.

-It was quite sad to hear that a few weeks back a certain National League player who will only be known as a Sydney Based player had his phone switched off all week and did not turn up to any training sessions for the club.

The player in question did not even turn up the club's home match, certainly something that must be stamped out in our very own National League.

-Rumors have circulated the press that yet another coach is set to feel the wrath of yet another sacking.

Marconi's caretaker coach and former Socceroo headman Rale Rasic could be on his last legs as former Stallions player Jean-Paul de Marigny could be the next man in charge.

Rasic took over Raul Blanco a few weeks back but could assume a role with the club as purely its operations manager its been understood.

Purely speculation at the moment, Jean-Paul, who currently writes in ABSW's Soccer NSW's section showcasing his tips of the week could well be tipping who he should use in his starting eleven for Marconi this season?

-Alas more information has come to the Ivan Jolic issue as stated in 'from the dressing sheds' last week, Jolic decided to part company with the Knights in a plight to concentrate on his career being an engineer.

Ivan was not throwing the towel in all together and had a number of offers from the local Victorian Premier League which kicked-off its season last week.

Jolic put pen to paper with the Whittlesea Stallions who are currently owned by local businessman Sam Cuteri. Also another Knights

star has left Sommers Street and has also signed with a VPL club.

Striker Adrian Cervinski agreed to terms with Green Gully who is currently coached by ex-Knights coach Ian Dobson.

-It was quite odd to see that in the Spirit's last Match Day Program against the Power a few ex-players on the front page of the booklet were evident.

Robbie Enes (Now of Marconi) and Scotty Thomas (Now of Newcastle United) were both on the front page of the Spirit's program.

Surely the club could have done better in putting classy young stars such as Adam Kwasnik, Dylan Macallister, Jonathon Richter and the list goes on of players who deserve a mention on the club's mag.

-It's become official that former Melbourne Knights midfielder Kresimir Marusic is keen on securing the coaches role at Knights Stadium.

Mirko Bazic has taken the advisor's role at the Knights and Marusic could well be in for the number one spot at the club.

"I am interested. I know about the club's position but the money is not the over-riding factor for me - it never was. All I am asking for is for a chance," Marusic stated to the Herald Sun.

-With the big match only days away from kick-off, many people have wondered where would be the best place to watch the England v Socceroos clash.

One thing's for sure, Melbourne spectators have the great chance to witness the game live on the box with an electrifying atmosphere at Federation Square.

Being organized by the Green and Gold Army, the Federation Square is set to rock Melbourne at 7pm when the match kick's off.

The best advice to this is, get in early to gain a good seat as this match is a must for any die-hard Socceroo fan.

-It was good to see that the Marconi Stallions finally snapped up defender Luke Casserly. Having had trials in Asia, Casserly stated that if his trials were unsuccessful then a return to his old club was on the cards.

Also more good news was that striker Joe Spiteri has also signed an 18-month contract with the club.

-If you're a female soccer player of Greek background and are looking to going to Greece then this is could be your lucky break.

On the 25th of June, a competition called 'Elliniada' to be held in Thessaloniki-Greece is a contest set to bring the Greek origin together.

This year will be the first year that this tournament will be held.

Women's soccer will be a sport contested. There is the opportunity for Greeks from Oceania to play against Greeks from Europe, America, Africa/Asia, Cyprus and Greece. Travel costs and accommodation will be paid for.

So if your interested please contact Sandra Stavrou on 0438 092 677 for more information or e-mail at sandrastavrou@iprimus.com.au

The deadline for applications is 15 February 2003 - for more information on the tournament visit www.elliniada.gr

ROUND 23

FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2003

Newcastle United — Parramatta Power
Northern Spirit — Adelaide City Force

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2003

Perth Glory — Olympic Sharks

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2003

Football Kingz — Brisbane Strikers
Sydney United — Melbourne Knights
South Melbourne — Marconi Stallions

Bye — Wollongong Wolves

ROUND 22

FRIDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2003

Adelaide City Force — Sydney United
Marconi Stallions — Newcastle United

SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2003

Parramatta Power — Football Kingz

SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2003

Melbourne Knights — South Melbourne
Wollongong Wolves — Perth Glory
Olympic Sharks — Northern Spirit

Bye — Brisbane Strikers




SOCCER NSW



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NSW PREMIER LEAGUE SEASON 2002/2003

MATCH OF THE ROUND

 Parramatta Eagles	0
 C'bury-M'ville Olympic	3

By Greg Stock

They say a week can be a long time in politics, but after watching Parramatta Eagles' performance against Canterbury-Marrickville on Sunday evening, you'd have to say the same thing about football.

Against Rockdale last start they were outstanding in their come from behind 4-

2 win, but against Canterbury just a week later were nothing short of awful, and in the words of their coach John Calleja 'bloody awful.'

With a top three spot on the line for the winner, the Eagles started the game as warm favorites on the back of some solid performances. But after twenty minutes the formbook was thrown out the window, the Berries taking the early lead via an Andy Amegashie strike and never looking back.

Unable to match the intensity of the visitors they completely dropped their heads and at times looked like witch's hats for the Berries forwards. Their tough defence which had been their trademark all season disintegrated and their midfield looked lost for ideas, seemingly going through the motions.

In the end it was a football lesson and if not for some lack of composure in front of goal by some over zealous Berries forwards the result might have been a lot more severe. Not that their efforts detracted from the performance of Canterbury who dominated the match from start to finish, creating five times as many chances, and hitting the back of the net three times. With midfielders Paul Bourke and George Nohra given acres of space to work their moves, Leigh Gunn and Amegashie enjoyed a day out, teasing and taunting their more profile markers in a display that had coach Greg Woodhouse leaping about with great aplomb.

Paul Bourke picked up his second brace of goals for the season drilling a 49th minute shot from the left hand side after an excellent switch from Nohra on the right, before he bent a freekick around the wall in the 77th minute to leave goalkeeper Steve Angelov no chance.

Defenders Tom Maric and Cormack Begley near faultless blanketing Daniel Kukucka, Mauricio Islas and substitute Daniel Cummins with ease. Even little Sasa Utjesenovic got in on the act, pushing forward from his role as sweeper to drive some moves forward working well with Alan Picken in the centre of the park.

But while Canterbury's excellent performance can't be understated the real question is what happened to the Eagles. Coach John Calleja was at a loss to explain, not able to name one player who stood up in the post match discussions.

Given that the match also marked the last game for Paul O'Grady with the club before a move to NSL side Parramatta Power, the loss was even more difficult to comprehend. Canterbury taking all the plaudits in a game which really cements their chances as a genuine top three chance.



Paul O'Grady off to Parramatta Power.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES 0

C'BURY-M'VILLE OLYMPIC 3

(Andy Amegashie 20' Paul Bourke 39' 78')

at Melita Stadium, South Granville

PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Steve Angelov, Michael Kladis, Malcolm Mellak (Anthony Mondello 74'), Mark Reveley, Daniel Borg (Daniel Cummins 55'), Daniel Kukucka, Anthony Mittiga, Matthew O'Shea, Ben Delicata, Brett Townley-Jones (Mauricio Islas 55'), Paul O'Grady.
Coach: John Calleja.

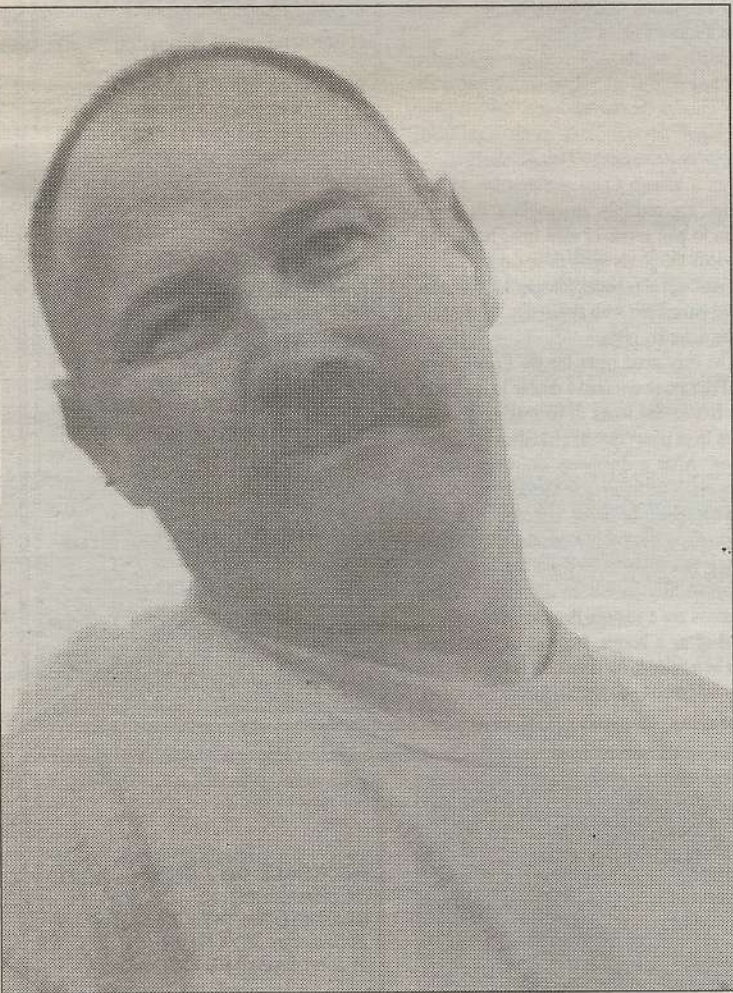
CANTERBURY-MARRICKVILLE OLYMPIC: Ivan Necevski, Sasa Utjesenovic, Cormack Begley, Tom Maric, Paul Bourke (Shane Cevenini 89'), Leigh Gunn (Aheleas Kotsopoulos 86'), Alan Picken, George Nohra, Ben Price (Frank Pellizzeri 88'), Andy Amegashie, John Kyriazopoulos.
Coach: Greg Woodhouse.

Yellow Cards: Canterbury: Gunn 11' Bourke 49' Price 69' Parramatta Eagles: Delicata 77'

Referee: Nick Asargiotis

Assistant Referees: Michael Collins and Keith Anderson

Fourth Official: Gerald Parsons



Canterbury Marrickville Olympic coach Greg Woodhouse well pleased with his charges efforts heading into the mid-season break.

SOCCER NSW

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SOCCER NSW



Belconnen Blue Devils	3
Fairfield Bulls	1

By Graham Cooke

Fairfield Bulls coach Sam Issac said the NSW Premier League's bottom club would not have long to wait for their next win in the competition.

"When I came here four weeks ago, the boys were not really fit and we are fixing that," he said. "Also we are recruiting one or two more players who will definitely add strength to the side."

"I think we will be giving the league a hell of a shake in the second round."

Issac's optimism is based on a strong second-half performance from the Bulls who were then trailing to a 39th minute Lee Pietrukowski header from a corner.

Their best chance among several at this time was a header at the near post by Benjamin Green that goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca could only push out. The ball fell to Green again, but a block by Adrian Dowling robbed him of the second chance.

The game turned in the 77th minute when Bulls defender Mitch Daley allowed Danny Macor to get goalside of him. In a desperate attempt to repair the damage he pulled the striker down for which the Devils gained a penalty and Daley received his marching orders from referee Ned Sparkes. Macor scored from the spot.

There it rested until stoppage time when the Bulls most outstanding player, Jason Connolly, scored the goal of the game, a low, powerful drive that Giannasca had no hope of stopping.

But within a minute Belconnen had restored the margin when Clinton Larfield, fast gaining a reputation as a super sub, got on the end of a Michael Katz cross to head past Darren Moore from close range.

Devils coach Lino Fiorese said his side was fortunate the Bulls did not convert some of the chances they created after half time. "There was a bit of concern then when we were allowing them to get in behind us, but in the end we sailed home safely," he said.



Daniel Macor knocked in a penalty for the Blue Devils.

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS .3
(L. Pietrukowski 39, D. Macor (pen) 78, C. Larfield 90+2)
FAIRFIELD BULLS1
(J. Connolly 90+1)
at McKellar Soccer Centre, McKellar

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS: 1 Anthony Giannasca, 2 Adrian Dowling, 4 Lee Pietrukowski, 5 Oscar Zamora, 7 Michael Katz, 8 Elliott Zwangobani, 10 Danny Macor, 11 David Arranz (17 Stephen Kemp 65), 12 Valerio Galeotti (15 Matthew Valeri 76), 13 Stewart Camara, 14 Marko Perinovic (9 C. Larfield 85).
Coach: Lino Fiorese

FAIRFIELD BULLS: 22 Darren Moore, 6 Benjamin Green (3+Isandro Berbis 85), 15 Jason Connolly, 8 Stewart Van Bentum (15 Simon Hutchinson 82), 10 Matthew Borg, 14 Ismael Arrarte, 7 Sargoon Gewargis (9 Marc Hoenselaars 49), 11 Luke Tomich, 13 Mitch Daley, 12 Luciano Berbis, 16 Michael Cindric.
Coach: Sam Issac
Referee: Ned Sparkes
Assistant Referees: Alistair Coe and Brett Woodford
Fourth Official: Michelle Treloar
Yellow Cards: Belconnen: Blue Devils: Matthew Valeri 83, Clinton Larfield 90. Fairfield Bulls: Jason Connolly 41, Michael Cindric 88, Stewart Van Bentum 80.
Red Card: Fairfield Bulls: Mitch Daley 77.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles	7
Central Coast Coasties	2

By Paul Goodwin

Back at the Serbian Centre for the visit of the resolute Central Coast, Bonnyrigg White Eagles thought they might have a fight on their hands following sound showings by the Coasties in many of their recent games.

With this in mind, they began their latest home game with some measure of respect for their opponents.

And when they went a goal down, inside six minutes, they had received another jolt to remind them of the task that lay in front of them.

After that, however, the Bonnyrigg steamroller cranked into life and, having equalised inside two minutes, the White Eagles went on to post a comfortable 3-1 half time lead, ultimately running out 7-2 winners in a game that was always played in a tremendous spirit.

A determined start to the second half by the Coasties could have seen the visitors claw their way back, but they were quickly undone by a succession of goals from an on-fire home side

that soon saw them racing to a 7-1 lead.

Then, when long serving midfielder Dave Harding was sent off for using an elbow on new NSW squad member Chris Fleming, in an off-the-ball incident, leaving the rampant home side with only ten men, the Coasties managed to score a second.

Former Central Coast man Shane Knight was aiming to celebrate against his old club with a hat trick and his coach Ljube Jancev had sent him forward in search of that elusive third goal, but the visitors had the chance then instead to break quickly and get another goal for their efforts. But the game by that stage had long been put beyond their reach.

Coasties had opened the scoring, completely against the run of play, in the 6th minute with James Monie getting on the end of a superb, long, Fleming through pass and being given yards of free space in the box, only having to stick out a leg to drill the ball past Fernando Greco.

Since Bonnyrigg had already looked dangerous from as early as the second minute when Joe Bruni forced a fine, diving save from Ben Xerri, it came as no real surprise when they

equalised almost immediately.

Bonnyrigg had their passing game going well throughout and when Aaron Burgess found the ball at his feet 20 yards out and fired in a low shot, Harding was lucky to be well enough placed to get a toe in before a Coast defender could react and the sides were level once more.

The locals hit the lead in the 24th when Harding's corner from the left was met with a glancing header at the near post by Knight, in clinical fashion.

Knight made it 3-1 in the 35th when he hit a slashing drive from 25 yards out, following more good lead-up work by an impressive Bonnyrigg outfit.

In the 61st Knight got away down the right and sent over a precision cross to the near post for Devrim Huseyin to head home smartly and then three minutes later, Michael Hawrysiuk was able to head down powerfully at the far post from a similar cross, this time by Bruni and then watch the ball bounce awkwardly over an already committed keeper.

In the 68th Bruni, on the right, put Burgess through to face an exposed Greco and the former Northern Spirit youngster kept his composure to steer the ball into the inviting net from 12 yards out.

Another header, this time from substitute, Zlatko Donev, completed the scoring for Bonnyrigg in the 72nd minute. Bruni had been the provider from the left and it was the easiest

goal of the match, among many seemingly effortless strikes by the super-slick home side. Coast could have struck twice after that, with Harding off the field.

Marc Falzon was played in by Monie in the 83rd but, facing only Greco, he managed to skew his shot wide of the target.

Finally, in the 90th, Monie grabbed a deserved second after Tom Quilty had sauntered through the 'switched-off' home defence and unselfishly offloaded to his team mate, when very well placed to score himself.

Not a vintage Coast performance, by any means, but certainly an ominous sign of a return to past levels of skill from Bonnyrigg, who look the goods again these days.

Coast will play better, for sure, but few sides would have lived with Bonnyrigg on this particular Saturday night.

The only good news for the Coasties was that Peter Preston scored a double in the Under 19's fixture and looks to be making a strong return from injury that he picked up in the pre-season. After a drubbling like that, Preston much surely be figuring in McLafferty's plans.

What must be most concerning to the Coasties coach is not just that they have lost to the big gun teams of late, but the number of goals that they have conceded 16 goals in 3 defeats is not a statistic that Ben Xerri will be proud of as a keeper, but part of that blame must be handed to the defenders in front of him. They will need to tighten up for the 2nd round.

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 7
(D Harding 8', S Knight 24/35', D Huseyin 61', M Hawrysiuk 64', A Burgess 68', Z Donev 72')
CENTRAL COAST COASTIES 2
(J Monie 6/90')
at Serbian Centre, Bonnyrigg

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES: 1 Fernando Greco, 3 Mark D'Alessandro, 15 Oygur Askin, 5 Tayfun Devrimol (C) (Zlatko Glavas 65), 23 Devrim Huseyin, 7 Javier Mancino, 8 David Harding, 16 Michael Hawrysiuk (12 Zlatko Donev 69), 9 Shane Knight, 21 Aaron Burgess, 11 Joe Bruni (14 Fred Umlj 77)
Subs not used: Alex Augusto (RGK), 13 Robert Anglevski.

Coach: Ljube Jancev
CENTRAL COAST COASTIES: 20 Ben Xerri, 3 David Brewer (12 Ben Murrell), 4 Mitchell Cook (5 Liam Cameron 69), 18 Nathan Byrn (11 Tom Gully 69), 6 Aron Binskin, 14 Chris Fleming, 17 Pat Bradley (C), 9 Peter Haynes, 2 Josh Maguire, 10 Marc Falzon, 13 James Monie
Sub not used: 1 Matthew Trott (RGK)
Coach: John McLafferty
Referee: Vic Gaudi
Assistant Referees: Jim Nikolaou and Colin Smith
Fourth Official: Ernie Horvath
Red Card: Bonnyrigg: Dave Harding 74
Yellow Cards: Bonnyrigg: Dave Harding 33, Michael Hawrysiuk 69; Central Coast Coasties: Josh Maguire 31, James Monie 32

Rockdale City Suns	1
Blacktown City Demons	2

By Greg Stock

Awithering five minute burst of two goals just before half-time, was enough for Blacktown to send Rockdale to their second straight defeat in their clash at John Crehan Park on Saturday night.

With just two competition points separating the sides prior to kick-off, there was much to play for, and both sides didn't let the fans down in the way of action, putting on one of the best matches seen this season.

Blacktown surprisingly sluggish for the first half-hour went behind to a well taken goal by Robbie Todorovski who hit a first time shot from the edge of the six yard box, after defender Malcolm Bideau had brilliantly knocked

down a corner to his feet from the back post. Allowing the Suns plenty of time and space, it wasn't until the thirty-minute mark that the Demons switched out of first gear and decided to play football.

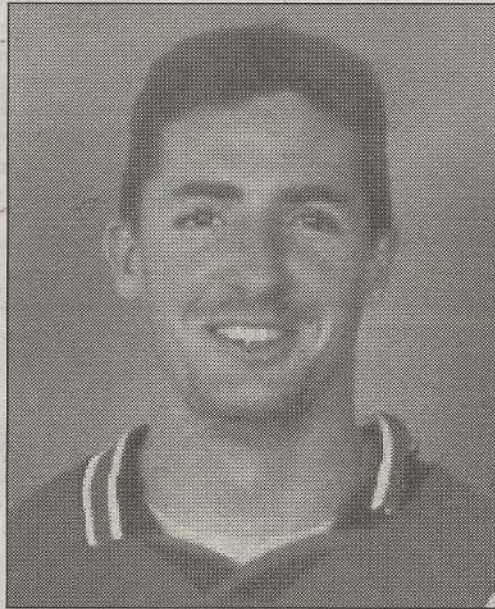
Thirty eight minutes in Simon Catanzaro got them back on level terms when he was able to follow up a Luke Roodenberg shot that was blocked by goalkeeper Peter Trajceviski before Kain Rastall put the finishing touches to a well worked move that saw him create an acre of space down the left hand side of the penalty box.

The two goals seemingly fired up Blacktown who really worked hard in the second half and were arguably the better of the two sides for the remainder. A fingertip save by Trajceviski with two other shots cleared off the line testament to a Demons forward line that

dominated the second stanza.

It was a disappointing result for Rockdale who really gave themselves a good chance of easing a boilover in this match. But with Spase Najdoski well held by Paul Yates and the lively Denis Alilovic marked out of the game in the second half, their option were limited, though striker Rob Todorovski did try hard throughout.

For the victors, Kain Rastall celebrated his call up to the state team scoring a goal and driving his side from the centre of the park. He was well supported by forwards Catanzaro and Roodenberg, while Jimmy Nikas and Naoki Imaya had strong games.



Kain Rastall found himself on the scoresheet just before half-time.

ROCKDALE CITY SUNS1
(R Todorovski 14')
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS .2
(S Catanzaro 38', K Rastall 43')
at John Crehan Park, Cringila

ROCKDALE CITY SUNS: Peter Trajceviski, Richard Piesa, Malcolm Bideau, Ghenadie Costiuc (David Brickell), Peter Apolevski, Tony Ju, Denis Alilovic, Ben Deighan (Vadim Milkoutski), Steven Dimitrievski, Spase Najdoski (Goce Troski), Robbie Todorovski.
Coaches: Mile Todorovski and Bill Pilovski.

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS: John Crawley, Dion Valle, Damien Foxe, Paul Yates, Naoki Imaya, David Reid, Kain Rastall, Jimmy Nikas (Steven Riches), Simon Catanzaro (Brian Vanega), Colin Luff, Luke Roodenberg.
Coach: Brian Brown.



SOCCER NSW



A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	3
Penrith Panthers	1

By Greg Stock

Coming off an unexpected loss at Bankstown and facing a side full of fight and endeavour in Penrith Panthers, A.P.I.A. were bound to be fired up for this one.

Coach Les De Celis made changes, as he vowed he would, following the poor showing at Jensen Park and even with their two injured forwards back in business Penrith had no answer to the competition leaders' new spirit.

The coach relegated Steve Karavata to the bench and did not include Joe Moric at all on the team sheet, promoting Norman Tome to partner Zlatko Arambasic up front and giving a start to John-Paul Boutros.

The new look combination worked well and the game was only 22 minutes old when Arambasic gave his side the lead.

The vastly experienced striker was able to make his far post header look like one right out

of the text books as he climbed high at the far post to meet Ante Moric's corner and beat Chad Taylor easily.

Then, inexplicably, and with his side holding a slender one goal lead, he managed to incur the wrath of referee Alex Spiroski through his vehement protests to the assistant referee, over a contested line call, which he prolonged, thus earning him his marching orders prematurely.

With only ten men A.P.I.A. seemed to cope well enough and soon had a second goal to show for their efforts.

Captain Marcus Stergiopoulos paraded all his skills with both feet, his dead ball ability and his talent for getting forward productively by netting a vital goal from a free kick around the edge of the box in the 32nd minute.

Effortlessly curling the ball around the wall with his right foot and finding the top left corner of the net, he turned to accept the plaudits of a small, but vocal Lambert Park crowd.

He wasn't finished yet, however, as his party

piece was still to come in the shadows of half time.

John-Paul Boutros played Sam La Rocca in and from the resultant pass, provided to him 30 yards out from goal, Stergiopoulos slammed a left footer past the keeper with some power.

Penrith were shell shocked, but did at least try and mount a comeback.

They managed to pull a goal back against A.P.I.A.'s remaining ten men in the 70th minute.

Daniel McCann, their best player on the day by far, took off on a run from deep in his own half and after evading a tackle from Paul Dee, skipped past three other opponents before hitting a low shot past the outstretched hand of Bob Catlin, from his position wide on the left.

Before that goal A.P.I.A.'s reliable defender Andrew Clark had almost scored the most spectacular goal of the game.

His acrobatic scissor kick volley just missed the target after a fine cross from Boutros.

Before Penrith's goal, and at the hour mark in the game, the visitors almost managed to open their scoring, but Shane Hammond's free header was wide of the target.

Penrith continued to battle on and did so until the final whistle but this was A.P.I.A.'s day and they will be relieved to go further clear at the top of the table as a result of this win.



Marcus Stergiopoulos scored a double for the Tigers.

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS 3
(Z Arambasic 22', M Stergiopoulos 33'/45')
PENRITH PANTHERS 1
(D McCann 71')
at Lambert Park, Leichhardt

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS: 1 Bob Catlin, 19 Andrew Clark, 5 Michael Galluzzo, 17 Paul Dee, 5 Marcus Stergiopoulos (C), 15 Damon Langan, 18 Ante Moric (11 Ryan Jones 64), 13 Norman Tome, 7 Sam La Rocca, 14 John-Paul Boutros (12 Jeremy Brown 75), 9 Zlatko Arambasic.
Sub not used: 20 Murray Nelson (RGK), 10 Steve Karavata.
Coach: Les De Celis
PENRITH PANTHERS: 1 Chad Taylor, 26 Marty McCaffery (8 Paul Marosevic 54), 4 Ryan Noble, 6 Daniel Wells (20 Osvaldo El Ali 59), 17 Daniel McCann, 21 Luke Boyd, 11 Luke O'Connell (C), 10 Shane Hammond, 15 Chad Lewis, 13 Jason Sciberras, 19 Danny Hinton (9 Rod Hutchinson 20).
Subs not used: 24 Kurt Van Arkel (RGK), 29 Michael McCrory.
Coach: Tony Rassmussen
Referee: Alex Spiroski
Assistant Referees: Andrew Kay and Wayne Lenardon
Fourth Official: Brendon Skinner
Red Card: Apia: Zlatko Arambasic 27
Yellow Cards: Apia-Leichhardt: Marcus Stergiopoulos 13, Zlatko Arambasic 27, Ante Moric 60; Penrith Panthers: Marty McCaffery 26, Daniel McCann 32, Chad Taylor 50, Chad Lewis 83

St George Saints	1
Bankstown City Lions	2

By Paul Goodwin

Following their shock 3-1 win over leaders A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt, Bankstown City Lions arrived at St George Stadium keen to gain their first away win of the season ahead of their game in Canberra against Belconnen next Sunday.

A win against St George would represent a third win on the trot and a good sign that the talented side would at last realise their potential.

The Saints, by contrast, had come off a loss at powerful Canterbury and were looking to restore some pride and clamber away from the bottom of the ladder where they were dragged into a battle with Fairfield to avoid the wooden spoon this season.

Manny Spanoudakis had the luxury at last of a full squad to choose from and both grades

were well catered for. He sprang a surprise by handing former Wollongong Wolves youth keeper the number one shirt and asked Luke McDougall to play in the Under 19s this week, as well as three other first grade regulars including the keeper Con Anastasiadis.

His other big news was the signing of former Saints' junior product Vince Savoca after the midfielder had returned from a stint in Malaysia with Johor FC.

St George came under immediate pressure from the Lions and a Chris Bradley free kick in the first minute just cleared the bar, then, five minutes later, the elusive Robbie Gomez ran onto a long pass from Glenn Moore and with the goal at his mercy angled his shot just wide of the left post.

Disaster struck the home side in the 17th minute, for a tackle by George Maglis on Alex Asanovic inside the area was adjudged by

referee Simon Przydacz to be a foul and a penalty was awarded.

Abbas Saad made a song and dance about the decision to the official and was cautioned, but when he persisted he was given his marching orders.

Not only did Bryan Raeburn put away the penalty, despite the good attempt by Weston to save it, but the Saints had to fight the remainder of the match with only ten men.

Bankstown turned the screw tighter in the 40th minute when a peach of a pass from George Issa released Raeburn once more and the very mobile midfielder stroled through to face Weston and finished stylishly.

Raeburn, who ran his heart out all evening, almost grabbed his hat trick in the last seconds of the first half, but his goal-bound shot was brilliantly tipped over by the agile young keeper.

St George rang the changes at half time, bringing on Archie Markopoulos and long time Saints favourite Savoca and the team looked much more lively and likely to get something out of the game.

The Saints were thrown a lifeline only 30 seconds after the restart when a stray pass

intended for the Bankstown keeper was latched onto by Tony Alilovic who wasted no time in finding Bruno Beddoni.

The veteran striker was able to slot past Zlatko Josevski as easily as anyone else might shell peas.

St George battled away for the rest of the match, without much luck and were always in danger of being caught on the break, but apart from a looping header from Asanovic that came back off the angle of the right upright, a couple of other Asanovic efforts and a few more from Raeburn, it was mostly St George who took the ball forward in the second half.

George Fernandez, Bankstown's coach, was very pleased with the effort, the club's third win on the bounce and since he had set himself a target of six games before he expected to see the team settle into its ideal shape and he had only lost two since taking over before these three latest successes he was more than satisfied with his side's effort.

St George were unlucky, again, but if they had been able to field eleven men for the whole game their chances might have been increased and at least a point, or maybe more, could have been earned.

ST GEORGE SAINTS 1
(B Beddoni 46')
BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 2
(B Raeburn 17pen/40')
at St George Stadium, Rockdale

ST GEORGE: 41 Phil Weston, 3 Nick Boliatis, 4 Evangelos Petratos, 12 Simon Verrender, 6 Jose Mendes, 7 George Maglis (11 Archie Markopoulos 46), 10 Bruno Beddoni, 13 Ali Salim, 19 Abbas Saad, 16 Tony Alilovic, 14 Zoki Adioski (35 Vince Savoca 46).
Subs not used: 1 Michael Xuereb (RGK), 17 Ali Chahine, 18 Arthur Diles.
Coach: Manny Spanoudakis
BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS: 1 Zlatko Josevski, 2 Damien Lukic, 3 Elias Augerinos (14 Paul Weame 58), 5 Richard Lukic (C), 4 Bryan Raeburn (12 Robert Issa 78), 6 Chris Bradley, 8 Glenn Moore, 13 George Issa, 15 Fernando de Los Santos, 7 Alex Asanovic, 9 Robert Gomez (15 Alex Trpovski 84).
Sub not used: Adrian Marcellino (RGK), 17 Jane Talceviski.
Coach: George Fernandez
Referee: Simon Przydacz

FROM THE SIDELINES By Greg Stock

*All roads lead to historical Henson Park this Thursday night for the rescheduled fixture between Canterbury-Marrickville and Belconnen Blue Devils. First grade kicks off at 8.00pm with the Under-19s at 6.00pm. On Sunday afternoon, Belconnen will host George Fernandez and his Bankstown City Lions at the McKellar Soccer Centre, Under-19s at 4.00pm and first grade at 6.30pm.

*Fairfield Bulls have parted ways with mid-field dynamo Rob Angievski as the dust settles in the wake of the resignation of former coach Craig Sharpley. The ex-NSW representative, was on the bench for his new club Bonnyrigg in their 7-2 thrashing of Central Coast last Saturday night, and could make his first start next week covering for the suspended David Harding.

White Eagles boss Ljube Jancev wasn't too happy with the sending off of Harding who was having a great game, until he used his elbow in a tackle and was given an early shower by referee Vic Gauci. With Angievski ready and raring to go, it could be an easy swap, Harding out and Angievski in. Freddy Umlil has also returned to the club following trials in Austria

but given that he will be travelling to Holland in March for further trials, he may only play a small role over the next few weeks.

*In other transfer news, Belconnen have strengthened their playing roster resigning mid-fielder Nic Purdie. "Nic will be a solid addition to the team and his experience through the NSL and in Iceland will be invaluable to us leading into the second half of the season," stated Blue Devils coach Lino Fiorese. In his previous stint with the club last season, he played in 12 matches, starting 11 with zero goals scored for the Belconnen Blue Devils prior to leaving for Iceland to join club side 'KR Reykjavik'.

*Rockdale have also added some weight to their forward line acquiring the services of Goece Trposki from Marconi. Sadly for the talented youngster he didn't make his debut in the NSL and was strangely left languishing in the Marconi second team for most of the season. Now back in harness coach Bill Pilovski is confident he will return to his best form in the next few weeks.

*Parramatta Eagles will be without goal-

keeper Jason Holmes for the remainder of the season with a shoulder injury. Holmes went for an MRI scan last week and at the time of going to press was awaiting news which could see him undergo surgery in the next few weeks. His replacement Steve Angelov has done a superb job so far but returns to Fraser Park in two weeks for their season opener, coach John Calleja looking at a few options before the transfer window closes at the end of the month.

*The Coasties prodigal son Peter Preston is in line for a recall next week after watching his sides 7-2 loss to Bonnyrigg. 'Shirley' did his best work in the Under-19s scoring two goals and having a very strong game that is sure to earn him a call up to the first grade squad.

*It's not often that Blacktown City striker Colin Luff misses a penalty but that's exactly what he did on Saturday night against Rockdale. With his side 2-1 up, Luff stepped up to take the shot but miss hit the ball, only to see goalkeeper Peter Trajevski move across and block the shot.

*Our condolences to Blue Devils striker

Marko Perinovic whose father passed away last week. A true champion in every sense of the word he was one of the best players on the park in Belconnen's win over Fairfield on Saturday night.

*While the break next week comes at a great time for some sides, there are a few who will be playing some friendly matches. Blacktown City will be busy with two matches against Winter Super League opponents, Sydney University on Tuesday night and Fraser Park on Thursday night (both at Gabbie Stadium) while Rockdale will play Parramatta Power on Tuesday the 18th at the Rockdale Ilinden Sports Centre. After their 3-0 loss to Canterbury on Sunday, the Eagles will be looking to their Tuesday night match with Fraser Park at Melita Stadium as the opportunity to exorcise some demons and get their season back on track.

*Results of some Winter Super League trial games played over the weekend, Phil Moss and his Manly-Warringah Dolphins knocked over Fraser Park 4-3 after coming back from 3-0 down. Interesting to note that Craig Sharpley had some game time for Manly. Hajduk

Wanderers defeated Sydney University 3-0 on Sunday while the weekend before last Sydney University beat 'The General's' Minotaurs 5-0 whilst Sutherland and Manly played out a 2-2 draw.

*As mentioned in last weeks column, Fraser Park are all set to play a friendly match against NSL club side Northern Spirit at Kogarah Oval on Saturday February 22nd. The match is the first of another four planned for the Winter Super League season which will see the club change their 'nickname' from Jets to Dragons in a bid to strengthen their ties with the St. George Illawarra Rugby League club.

The club will be giving members of the 'Red V' club free admission to the match in a bid to introduce league fans to the game as well as offer corporate seating for \$40 which includes food, drinks and a reserved seat in the top deck of the grandstand. For every ticket purchased \$5 will be donated by the club to the Kogarah Community Appeal Fund. Tickets can be purchased from Timberline Quality Furniture at 354 Railway Parade Carlton (ph 9588 7055) or via Ian Baddock on 0412 298737.



SOCCER NSW



ROUND 11 RESULTS

FIRST GRADE

Belconnen Blue Devils3 (L Pietrukowski 39', D Macor 78' penalty, C Larfield 92')	Bonnyrigg White Eagles7 (D Harding 8', S Knights 24/35', D Huseyin 61', M Hawrysiuk 64', A Burgess 68', Z Donev 72')	Rockdale City Suns1 (R Todorovski 14')
Fairfield Bulls1 (J Connolly 91')	Central Coast Coasties2 (J Monie 6'190')	Blacktown City Demons2 (S Catanzaro 38', K Rastall 43')
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers3 (Z Arambasic 22', M Stergopoulos 33'/45')	St George Saints1 (B Beddoni 46')	Parramatta Eagles0
Penrith Panthers1 (D McCann 71')	Bankstown City Lions2 (B Raeburn 17(pen)/40')	C'bury-M'ville Olympic3 (A Amegashie 20', P Bourke 39'/78')

UNDER 19

Belconnen Blue Devils6 (own goal 20', J Caggiano 49', P Connell 63', A Rakic 67'/75' penalty/78' penalty)	Bonnyrigg White Eagles2 (T Macrae 25', M Simonovic 89')	Rockdale City Suns2 (S Cole 11', S Tanevski 50')
Fairfield Bulls0	Central Coast Coasties3 (P Preston 67'/81', B Murrell 69')	Blacktown City Demons3 (P Hartshorn 4', B Stefan 27', G Littlebury 79')
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers2	St George Saints2 (S Karamea 70', C Lagoudakis 85')	Parramatta Eagles3 (M De Bono 6', S Zahra 25', P Down 89')
Penrith Panthers3 (Match played Wednesday 29th January)	Bankstown City Lions2 (F Soleski 42', H Habbouch 69'(pen))	C'bury-M'ville Olympic1 (R Earp 49')

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	11	6	4	1	22	11	22
Blacktown City Demons	11	6	2	3	19	14	20
C'bury M'ville Olympic	10	5	4	1	16	8	19
Central Coast Coasties	11	5	3	3	17	21	18
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	11	5	2	4	22	17	17
Parramatta Eagles	11	4	5	2	15	10	17
Rockdale City Suns	11	4	3	4	21	19	15
Belconnen Blue Devils	9	3	4	2	13	11	13
Bankstown City Lions	10	4	1	5	13	17	13
Penrith Panthers	11	3	3	5	15	14	12
St George Saints	11	2	0	9	9	24	6
Fairfield Bulls	11	1	1	9	12	28	4

UNDER 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City Demons	11	9	2	0	42	10	29
Parramatta Eagles	11	7	3	1	23	9	24
Rockdale City Suns	11	7	2	2	22	14	23
Penrith Panthers	11	5	4	2	19	12	19
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	11	5	2	4	20	17	17
C'bury M'ville Olympic	10	4	2	4	22	18	14
Belconnen Blue Devils	9	3	4	2	16	11	13
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	11	3	2	6	12	19	11
Central Coast Coasties	11	2	4	5	11	26	10
St George Saints	11	1	3	7	8	20	6
Fairfield Bulls	11	1	2	8	8	31	5
Bankstown City Lions	10	0	4	6	8	24	4

UPCOMING ROUNDS

ROUND 8 / FIRST GRADE

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
C'bury-M'ville Olympic	v Belconnen Blue Devils	Thurs 13 Feb	8.00pm	Henson Park

UNDER 19

C'bury-M'ville Olympic	v Belconnen Blue Devils	Thurs 13 Feb	6.00pm	Henson Park
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ROUND 9 / FIRST GRADE

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Belconnen Blue Devils	v Bankstown City Lions	Sun 16 Feb	6.30pm	McKellar Soccer Centre

UNDER 19

Belconnen Blue Devils	v Bankstown City Lions	Sun 16 Feb	4.00pm	McKellar Soccer Centre
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ROUND 12 / FIRST GRADE

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	v Belconnen Blue Devils	Sat 22 Feb	7.00pm	Serbian Centre
Blacktown City Demons	v C'bury-M'ville Olympic	Sat 22 Feb	7.00pm	Gabbie Stadium
Central Coast Coasties	v Rockdale City Suns	Sat 22 Feb	7.00pm	Pluim Park
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	v Fairfield Bulls	Sun 23 Feb	6.00pm	Lambert Park
St George Saints	v Penrith Panthers	Sun 23 Feb	6.00pm	St George Stadium
Parramatta Eagles	v Bankstown City Lions	Sun 23 Feb	6.00pm	Melita Stadium

UNDER 19

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	v Belconnen Blue Devils	Sat 22 Feb	5.00pm	Serbian Centre
Blacktown City Demons	v C'bury-M'ville Olympic	Sat 22 Feb	5.00pm	Gabbie Stadium
Central Coast Coasties	v Rockdale City Suns	Sat 22 Feb	5.00pm	Pluim Park
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	v Fairfield Bulls	Sun 23 Feb	4.00pm	Lambert Park
St George Saints	v Penrith Panthers	Sun 23 Feb	4.00pm	St George Stadium
Parramatta Eagles	v Bankstown City Lions	Sun 23 Feb	4.00pm	Melita Stadium

TOP GOALSCORERS

10 — Spase Najdoski (Rockdale City Suns)

- 8 — Zlatko Arambasic (APIA-Leichhardt),
- 6 — Aaron Burgess (Bonnyrigg White Eagles, Robert Todorovski (Rockdale City Suns), James Monie (Central Coast),
- 5 — Marko Perinovic (Belconnen Blue Devils), Colin Luff (Blacktown City/Bankstown City), Simon Catanzaro (Blacktown City), Shane Knight (Bonnyrigg White Eagles),
- 4 — Luke Roodenberg (Blacktown City), Danny Hinton (Penrith Panthers), Daniel Kukucka (Parramatta Eagles), Paul Bourke (Canterbury-Marrickville),
- 3 — Rod Hutchinson (Penrith Panthers), Ante Moric (APIA-Leichhardt), Steve Karavatakis (APIA-Leichhardt), Matthew Borg (Fairfield Bulls), Nathan Rivera (Parramatta Eagles), Josh Maguire (Central Coast), Leigh Gunn (Canterbury), Clinton Larfield (Belconnen Blue Devils), Michael Hawrysiuk (Bonnyrigg), Daniel Macor (Belconnen), Bruno Beddoni (St. George), Andy Amegashie (Canterbury), Daniel McCann (Penrith Panthers),
- 2 — Allan Picken (Canterbury-Marrickville), Marc Hoenselaars (Fairfield Bulls), Ben Deighan (Rockdale City Suns), Ben Delicata (Parramatta Eagles), Sean Matthews (Central Coast), Robert Angievski (Bonnyrigg White Eagles/Fairfield Bulls), Marc Falzon (Central Coast), Damien Luksic (Bankstown), Alex Asanovic (Bankstown City), Sasha Utjesenovic (Canterbury-Marrickville), Kain Rastall (Blacktown City), David Harding (Bonnyrigg), Dione Valle (Blacktown City), Marcus Stergiopoulos (APIA-Leichhardt), Bryan Raeburn (Bankstown),

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SOCCER NSW



ROUND 8/9 PREVIEW



Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic

vs

Belconnen Blue Devils



Thursday 13th February, 2003 — 8.00pm
HENSON PARK, MARRICKVILLE

This, the first of two catch-up games to be contested by the visiting Blue Devils, over a four day period, sees the strong Canterbury side providing the opposition.

Canterbury, fresh from a big game at Melita Stadium on the Sunday, will want to maintain their thrust towards a place in the finals with this match that was originally called off when the visiting side was forced to turn back home for Canberra to save their homes and those of their neighbours during the tragic bush fires that swept through the nation's capital on a January Saturday afternoon.

Belconnen have strung together two handy wins now, clambering away from the nether regions of the ladder and beginning at last to look potential semi-finalists as they would have been touted to be before the season commenced.

Anthony Giannasca will play his 50th game for the Blue Devils in this one and the club skipper is sure to want to celebrate by taking all three points back with him and his team mates, following the unfortunate nature of the calling off of the original fixture and the fact that everyone has had to take a day off work and travel to Sydney twice now for the same match.

Belconnen appear to have a more settled side now and they will test the Berries fully.

Even though they have another game three days later they are sure to put in a really big effort in this one.

Nick Purdue is likely to come into the squad but reappear in the earlier Under 19 fixture and be on the bench for first grade.

Canterbury has lost its last two games against Belconnen at Henson Park and there may be some extra needle in this game that could see it develop into a real tussle for supremacy.

Canterbury's immensely satisfying 3-0 win at Melita Stadium sets them up nicely for the second half of the season now, but the Blue Devils still have a lot of work to do before the end of the first series of matches and this game, following two wins in succession leading into it, presents them with an opportunity to make further progress up the ladder to join clubs like Canterbury among those pressing for finals football.

Remember, this is a Thursday night fixture and kicks off at 8 pm at the famous old ground just off Sydenham Road.



Belconnen Blue Devils

vs

Bankstown City Lions



Sunday 16th February, 2003 — 6.30pm
McKELLAR SOCCER CENTRE, McKELLAR (ACT)

Back at headquarters Belconnen will probably be wishing they had met Bankstown earlier in the season before George Fernandez had them firing as well as they are now.

Newcomer Alex Asanovic has looked a real handful for defences in each of his outings for his new club and should again make his presence felt.

Following their morale boosting win over A.P.I.A. and their latest success at St George at the weekend, the Lions will now be looking for their second away win of the season and will be hopeful of getting it here.

Bankstown now shows more commitment and organisation and has made the most of opportunities when they have come their way.

The new players have worked

well, as have the old experienced hands like the Luksic brothers, tow-ers of strength at the back and Bryan Raeburn, who has always relished coming forward, but after 5 seasons at the club is again being given his chance to chime in and help in attacking manoeuvres. He appears to revel in his new found freedom.

Raeburn's double strike against St George, albeit one from the penalty spot, provided the impetus for the Lions to take an iron grip on that game. Fernandez is happy with the way the team is shaping up now, but knows there is a real lack of fire power up front since the departure of both Colin Luff and Norman Tome.

He is hoping to sign a new striker in time for this weekend's deferred match, a man who is fit and raring to go, but who has been out of action for

some time now.

Could this be a former Bankstown scorer from last winter season perhaps? Or someone who has played at a much higher level? Time will tell.

Belconnen report no injuries going into their two games in four days programme and no suspensions.

Nick Purdue may be ready to take his place in the starting eleven here, pending his return from overseas but much will depend on the outcome of the Canterbury game.

Much will also depend on how the team gets through its midweek assignment and if any players are missing through injury or suspension, but at this stage it is looking good for Lino Fiorese's men.

Belconnen will be hungry for all three points once more, but may have to settle for just one here.

SOCCER NSW ANNOUNCES STATE SQUAD 2003

STATE MATCH VICTORIA v NSW

State Representative coach Greg Woodhouse named his 'new-look' 20-man NSW state side over the weekend in preparation for the clash with Victoria on Sunday March 9.

The full squad is: Bob Catlin (A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers), Andrew Clark (A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers), Tayfun Devrimol (Bonnyrigg White Eagles), Marc Falzon (Central Coast Coasties), Chris Fleming (Central Coast Coasties), Michael Galluzzo (A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers), David Harding (Bonnyrigg White Eagles), Devrim Huseyin



Marc Falzon (right) marking fellow state squad member, Tayfun Devrimol (left).

(Bonnyrigg White Eagles), Shane Knight (Bonnyrigg White Eagles), Daniel Kukucka (Parramatta Eagles) Colin Luff (Blacktown City Demons), Josh Maguire (Central Coast Coasties), Spase Najdoski (Rockdale City Suns), Ivan Necevski (Canterbury Marrickville Olympic), Allen Picken (Canterbury Marrickville Olympic), Kain Rastall (Blacktown City Demons), David Reid (Blacktown City Demons), Marcos Stergiopoulos (A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers), Sasha Utjesenovic (Canterbury Marrickville Olympic), Stewart Van Bentum (Fairfield Bulls).

Manager: Mendo Cklamovski.

After indifferent performances last year against Queensland and South Australia, Woodhouse is looking to rebuild the state side with an injection of youth, including the likes of Marc Falzon and Chris Fleming from the Central Coast, Daniel Kukucka from Parramatta Eagles and Ivan Necevski from Canterbury-Marrickville.

"It's a very strong side on paper and I am very happy with the composition of the squad," said Woodhouse.

"We have tried to pick players on form as well as bring in some younger guys with a view for the future to balance it out."

At the age of 35, Rockdale striker Spase Najdoski earns his first call up to the state side, after scoring an amazing 10 goals in 11 matches so far this season.

"Picking a side on form, there is just no way I could leave him out," said Woodhouse. "He is the leagues top scorer and is really playing well and his combination with Colin Luff could be one to watch out for."

Fairfield Bulls midfielder Stewart Van Bentum celebrated his call-up with a solid performance against Belconnen on the weekend, looking forward to the game at Epping Stadium in Melbourne. "It's great to get an opportunity at the elite level," said Van Bentum.

"While we have been struggling at club level it's

an honour to be recognised for my efforts and I'll be looking for a big performance and justify the faith shown in me by the selectors."

While the match on the park is expected to be hot, it should also be an interesting one on the coaching benches with Woodhouse expected to lock horns with Victorian boss Gary Cole.

Team mates together for the Socceroos in the early 1980s they have never coached opposing sides,

though they have appeared on the park in opposition colours, the record of results there stand at 7 wins from 9 starts for Gary Cole.

"I haven't seen Gary in years" quipped Woodhouse, "but it will be great to catch up and I'll be looking forward to putting one over him in the coaching ranks and bringing the trophy back to NSW."



Dave Harding celebrated his state team selection with an early goal against the Coasties.



SOCCER NSW



SIR GEOFF HURST VISITS NSWIS @ VSP

On Saturday the 8th of February, Soccer NSW was honoured to have England's hero of '66, Sir Geoff Hurst, visit Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood to observe the NSW Institute of Sport squad go through their paces.

Having heard of the Academy that produced Harry Kewell, Geoff took time out from holidaying on the Gold Coast to fly into Sydney to specifically observe the NSW Institute of Sport (NSWIS) program in action. On hand to explain the finer details of the program were Olympic gold medallist and current Director of the NSWIS, Ralph Doubell, NSWIS Head Soccer coach Kelly Cross, and Soccer NSW's Coaching and Development Manager, Jean-Paul de Marigny.

Geoff watched a solid 90-minute session from the state's elite 14 and 15 year olds that encompassed ball related warm-ups, passing and footwork drills, shooting practice and a conditioned small sided game, that provided plenty of action.

Throughout the session, Kelly Cross and Jean-Paul de Marigny explained the basis of the program; selection methods, biometric and physiological assessment, nutritional advice, sports psychology services, training regimes, match

practice and international touring experience. Geoff was impressed by the program, and commented that he was not surprised by the standard of the program as indicated by the large contingent of Australians currently playing at the highest level in England and Europe.

The main reason behind the visit to Sydney is that Geoff, holds the position as the Director of Football for the McDonald's Community Football program, a grass roots initiative of the English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish Football Associations. As part of the program, McDonald's major ambition through its partnership with The F.A.'s, is to increase the number of qualified coaches in schools and communities by over 50% in the next four years - creating 8,000 new football coaches, as well as providing much needed equipment to those who need it most.

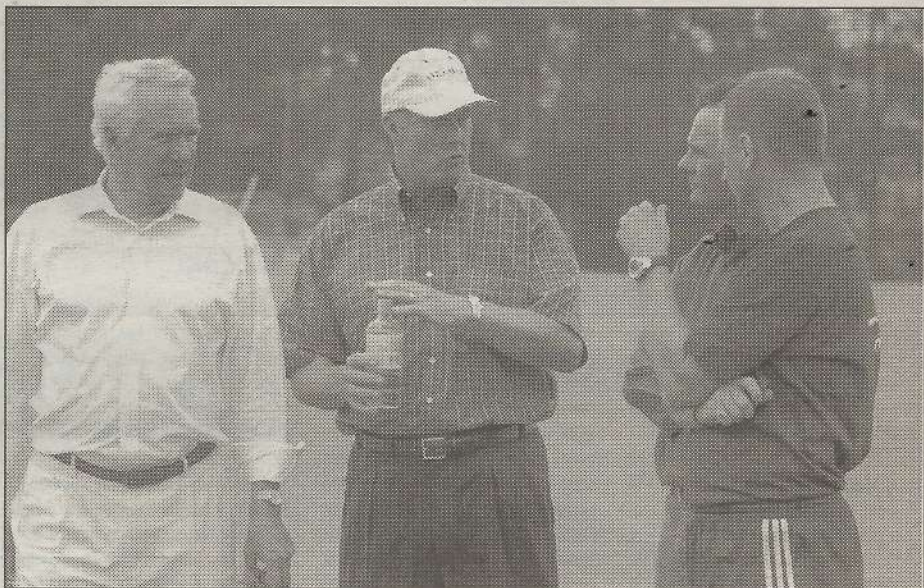
McDonald's has committed millions of pounds into this community program, and with over 3 million grass roots footballers in the UK it greatly overshadows Australian participation figures. Unlike other sponsors, McDonald's restaurants in the UK have taken a hands-on role in the roll-out of this program, working with local football governing bodies and in conjunction with their community restaurants to reach to community football organizations.

The most recognisable influence that Australian Soccer Supporters would have noticed in regard to the McDonald's program is the recent renaming of the pre-season Charity Shield as the Community Shield. Following last year's Community Shield, McDonald's donated 2,140 footballs to schools and youth teams throughout Britain.

Before the match, McDonald's also made a pledge to donate 1,000 footballs for coaching to schools and junior community teams in North London and Liverpool for every goal scored. Add to that, the Community Shield Man of the Match, Martin Keown, who was playing in his 400th game for Arsenal, was also able to donate £1,000 of coaching equipment to the school of his choice, courtesy of McDonald's.

Partnering Geoff in this initiative, is another British footballing great in Welsh assistant manager and Manchester United coach Eric Harrison who has been appointed as the McDonald's Community football National Coach. Harrison has been credited as being a major influence in the careers of David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Paul Scholes, and who's wealth of experience can only be of benefit to the program.

Ironically, being a former West Ham player, Sir Geoff was asked to be the guest of honour for this week's friendly international between Australia and England at Upton Park. Unfortunately, he had to decline the English FA's offer due to his Australian Visit. But you can bet that the "hero of '66" will be tuned into SBS on Thursday morning to watch his former team go round at his old home ground.



Director of NSWIS, Ralph Doubell (left), Sir Geoff Hurst (second left), with Jean-Paul de Marigny, Soccer NSW Coaching and Development Manager and NSWIS Head Coach Kelly Cross (right).

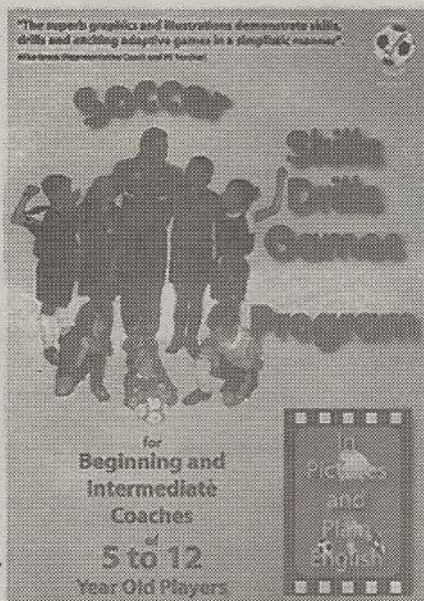


The hero of '66 watches Bruce Djite (left), and Will Thom (right), go through their paces'.



Kelly Cross (left) and Geoff Hurst (right) with the NSWIS boys lining up.

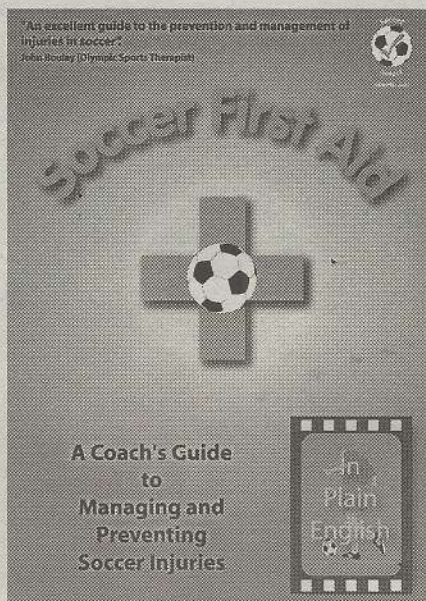
For more information about the McDonald's Community Football go to: www.mcdonalds.co.uk/football



The start of the 2003 season is just around the corner. Are you ready?

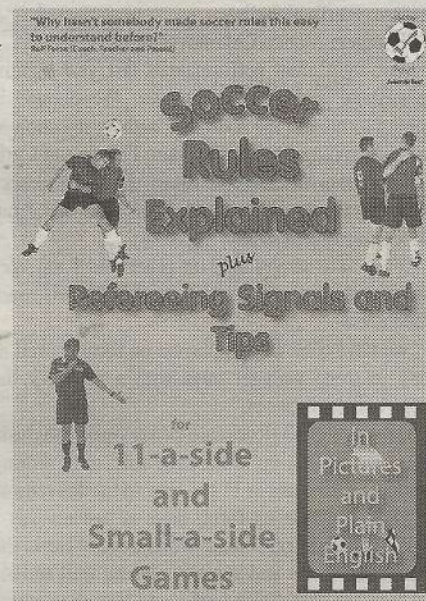
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SOCCER NSW



J-P's Coaching Tips

THE ROAD TO NATIONAL SELECTION IS SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Hi Everyone,

Well, what a week for Australian Soccer. You can't help but be excited about this week's "Friendly International" between the Socceroos and England at Upton Park. Speaking with my old team-mate (and flatmate) Frank Farina over the past few weeks, I know that he and all the boys in the squad are extremely pumped for a big one.

Representing your country is the highest honour in the game. But the road to national selection is long and arduous. Over the last month nearly 200 of our best Under 13 and 14 players began along that road by participating in the Elite Soccer Player (ESP) Program camps at Valentine Sports Park.

Having been identified by their Youth League clubs, players were invited to attend the ESP camps. In the Under 14 age group, 96 boys worked for three days to make a 32-man squad. This squad will meet again in April for the final cut before the Under 14 friendship games in July.

The 96 Under 13 players that attended a 2-day weekend camp, don't face any cuts, and will attend 2 more camps throughout the year for the state coaching staff to identify which players have the potential to make the next level.

For the uninitiated, a camp isn't all about sitting around the fire, roasting marshmallows and telling scary stories. We work the boys quite hard.

The under 14's having two training sessions in the morning, a pool recovery sessions in the afternoon and trial matches in the evening. The Under 13's also do two morning sessions and an afternoon session, with pool recovery and stretching sessions as needed.

Believe it or not, what happens on the playing field is only half of what the coaches are looking at.

At this level, we also look at how players conduct themselves off the playing field. Little things like whether a player looks after themselves such as drinking plenty of water, eating the right foods, getting enough sleep, wearing the right footwear and clothing (as instructed) and general behaviour.

There are many stories about players who are extremely gifted on the field, but due to their general behaviour and attitude have never made the higher levels of the game.

Fortunately for us, the desire to succeed amongst most players who attend the camps means that we are never short of talent that will make state and hopefully national selection.

In regard to the camps, I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all the ESP coaches and Instructors who attended the camps and updates, and especially Joe Nuietta, our sports trainer, who is joining up with the Joeys squad in Maroochydore this week.

On the topic of the U17 Australian Team, good luck to the boys going into camp, especially, Nathan, Jacob, Eric, Angelo, Lachlan and Richie. These boys are products of our elite state programs, and who knows, maybe one day these guys will line up against England.

*That's all for this week,
Until next week,
Happy coaching and Go the Socceroos.*

Jean-Paul de Marigny
Coaching and Development Manager,
Soccer NSW



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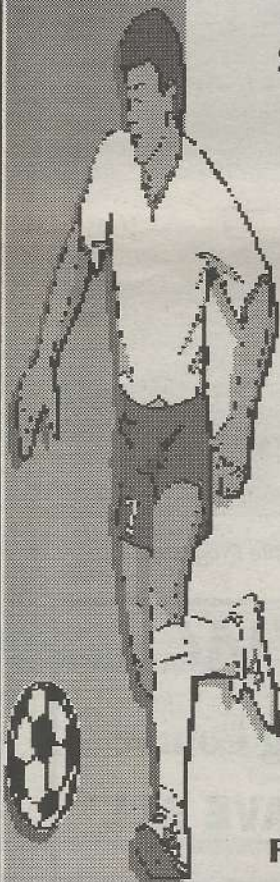
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SOCCER NSW @ CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE



The Australian Chinese Soccer Association and the kids from Coerver Coaching participated in this years' the Chinese New Year Parade along George Street, Sydney.
(Photos courtesy of Patrick Ma - Australian Chinese Soccer Association).

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SOCCER NSW: ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR?

Soccer NSW is in line for one of NSW Sports biggest awards tonight at a gala function to be held at the Waters Edge restaurant on the shores of Sydney Harbour.

Soccer NSW has been nominated for the NSW Sports Federation 'Organisation of the Year'. This title is awarded to a sporting organisation who has displayed outstanding qual-

ities based on one or more initiatives or programs developed and conducted specifically for the sport over 2002.

Soccer NSW, or more specifically the former NSW Soccer Federation and NSW Amateur Soccer Federation, has been nominated for the work that went into the unification of the sport of soccer in NSW that occurred on the 14th of December, 2002.

Ten years in the planning and negotiation, the dream of unification was finally made a reality throughout 2002 when key points were agreed upon by both the boards and stakeholders of each organisation which allowed the game to be restructured for the future.

Other nominees for the 2002 Organisation of the year are Womensport NSW and the NSW Sports Council for the Disabled.

Previous winners of the NSW Sports Federation organization of the year include: NSW Sports Council for the Disabled, NSW Touch Association, Sydney Football Club (Sydney Swans), NSW Squash, Tennis NSW, AFL, The School Sport Unit and NSW Surf Life Saving.

For more information, check out the NSW Sports Federation Website, www.sportnsw.com.au



ITALIAN SERIE A

ITALIAN AFFAIR

By Joe Russo

Last week we discussed the case of Mauro Camoranesi, the Argentinian who plays for Juventus, but has been selected by Italy for the friendly tomorrow night (Wednesday) against Portugal in Genoa.

Firstly allow me to make a correction: Camoranesi is a midfielder and not a striker as incorrectly stated in last week's article.

The story so far is that he was rejected by Argentina and then Italy picked up the pieces. Giovanni Trapattoni, who himself is some eight months overdue to resign, has called up Camoranesi. Trapattoni should be enjoying his retirement benefits and not making ludicrous calls like this one as national coach.

Sadly this case is another international disgrace whereby a player turns his back on his country of birth and plays for another one. Australia knows the feeling only too well.

Paolo Di Canio, the brilliant West Ham Utd player who sadly was never picked for Italy, agrees. Il Corriere Dello Sport one of Italy's three daily sport papers reported Di Canio's comments.

Di Canio is one who thinks that Juventus, Camoranesi's club, has put pressure on Trapattoni, also his former club, because it is convenient for Juventus to have an Italian on their books rather than a foreigner. You will probably find that Roma President, Franco Sensi, agrees too. Sensi insists that Juventus and AC Milan run Italian football and that all decisions are made to keep those clubs happy.

Then there is Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri who is urging his goalkeeper Carlo Cudicini to abandon Italy in favour of England and take up British citizenship.

What is going on? Do we just pick and choose which country we play for now?

Cudicini was a Third Division goalkeeper in Italy but has since made a name for himself at Chelsea.

There is little doubt that Cudicini is one of the best Premier League goalkeepers at the moment and certainly better than anyone that England are currently using in goals.

Cudicini's dad Fabio was a legendary AC Milan and Italy goalkeeper in his day but if Carlo listens to Ranieri he will be keeping goals for England.

Gianluigi Buffon and Francesco Toldo are Italy's preferred goalkeepers and Cudicini has his work cut out if he is going to dislodge any of them. However, that isn't the point. Cudicini is as much Italian as Camoranesi is Argentinian and for no other country should they play.

◆◆◆◆

Italian football is experiencing arguably its worst ever financial crisis and all thanks to the ridiculous salaries that clubs were prepared to pay players.

Club presidents have spent well beyond their means and often very average players were able to command a King's ransom.

However, the reality in Italy, like in most European countries, is that the gravy train has well and truly crashed. Market forces will see player salaries drop and clubs will make decisions based on financial prudence rather than emotion.

Proposals have floated around on what to do with the Serie A. Two groups of 20 teams each has been proposed with a play-off series to decide the champion. So much for tradition!

The best thing to do is keep the league at 18 teams and if any changes are to be made then ask the real stakeholders - the fans - what they want. The fans each week pay their money to watch the matches and they should be consulted as a matter of priority.

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Finally just a small good luck wish to the APIA Leichhardt Tigers Youth team that has departed for Italy and the Viareggio Youth Tournament known as the Coppa Carnevale.

It will be an enormous task for the team to go beyond the group phase but they should nevertheless really benefit from the experience.

It is a once in a lifetime experience for a lot of the boys and they will prove to be worthy opponents for Napoli, Cosenza and Reggina in their group. Good luck to the team and may excellent initiatives like this always continue to give as many youngsters as possible the experience.



David Trezeguet converts Juventus' winning goal from the penalty spot.

INTER 3 REGGINA 0

A wounded Christian Vieri cast a shadow over an otherwise memorable day for Inter Milan after they had dealt with unthreatening Reggina to take sole possession of top spot in Serie A.

Vieri put his team 1-0 up in the 10th minute with his 99th Serie A goal but a knee injury forced him to withdraw from the contest just before the half hour mark and he will undergo scans on the joint to ascertain the extent of damage.

His replacement Mohamed Kallon picked up the goalscoring mantle, scoring in the 39th minute and adding a third from the penalty spot three minutes later to move Inter to the Serie A summit

PERUGIA 1 AC MILAN

A solitary goal from Fabrizio Miccoli gave Perugia a surprise win over AC Milan, denting the title hopes of Carlo Ancelotti's visitors Sunday.

Miccoli pounced after 36 minutes to punish Milan who had been joint leaders with arch-rivals Inter and Juventus at the start of play.

The youngster, loaned to Perugia by Juve for the whole season, did his other club a favour with his first-half strike, meaning heartache for Milan on the ground where the Rossoneri clinched their last title in 1998-9.



Inter's Mohamed Kallon (left), who scored twice against Reggina takes on Martin Jiranek.

UDINESE 2 PAICENZA 1

Luigi Cagni was denied a point in his first match back in charge of Piacenza by a late Roberto Muzzi goal.

Cagni, who took charge of the relegation candidates following Andrea Agosti's recent sacking, must have thought his side had earned their first point in four games in the 78th minute against Udinese when Dario Hubner equalised Marek Jankulovski's 18th-minute opener.

But his hopes were cruelly dashed six minutes later by Muzzi.

LAZIO 1 TORINO 1

Argentinian midfielder Diego Simeone scored for the second time in two weeks as Lazio were held to a 1-1 draw by basement club Torino.

Simeone put the Biancoceleste ahead in the 34th minute but Marco Ferrante levelled the scores after 71 minutes to boost Torino's hopes of avoiding relegation.

Roberto Mancini's men suffered a further setback when influential defender Fernando Couto was dismissed in stoppage time for a second yellow card.

COMO 2 PARMA 2

Adrian Mutu scored two penalties as Parma came from behind to earn a 2-2 draw at lowly Como.

The Romanian international fired Parma in front after 31 minutes before Nicola Caccia and Nicola Amoroso gave the hosts an unlikely lead.

But Mutu slotted home two minutes from time to save his side from an embarrassing defeat.

MODENA 1 ROMA 1

Roma's Greek defender Traianos Dellas struck a minute from full-time to give his side a 1-1 draw at Modena.

Diomansy Kamara had given Modena the lead in the 42nd minute when he lobbed Roma goalkeeper Ivan Pelizzoli.

The hosts' defence held firm until the 89th minute when Dellas broke through to send the visiting fans wild with delight.

BRESCIA 0 CHIEVO 0

Brescia and Chievo shared the spoils after a goalless draw at the Mario Rigamonti stadium on Sunday.

Luigi Del Neri's men remain in fifth after notching another crucial point on their travels.

However, they will be satisfied with that after the home side missed a host of chances.

BOLOGNA 2 ATALANTA 3

In Sunday's evening game Fausto Rossini struck an injury-time winner as visitors Atalanta pulled off a shock victory at Bologna in a pulsating match.

Midfielder Alex Pinardi had earlier lit the touchpaper for the visitors from Bergamo, netting two well-taken goals either side of half-time as Atalanta served notice of their intent.

But Bologna's former Italy international Giuseppe Signori stepped up to change the script as he converted two second-half penalties in quick succession to level the scores at the Stadio Dell'Ara. But Rossini's late effort provided a final twist to a thrilling encounter.

JUVENTUS 1 EMPOLI 1

Juventus kept their Scudetto hopes alive after beating Empoli at the Stadio delle Alpi. The win was Juve's fifth in six games.

A David Trezeguet penalty in the seventh minute was enough to see off Silvio Baldini's side.

The champions got off to a flying start thanks to the referee and Trezeguet, but they ended the game clinging on to their lead. The penalty came when Gianluca Pessotto crossed into the visitors' area and Sanchez Cribari's hand made contact with the ball.

The decision seemed a harsh one, as Cribari seemed to have little chance of getting his hand out of the way, but Trezeguet did not need asking twice before he powered the spot-kick high into the goal.

FIXTURES

Sunday 16 February 2003

Piacenza v Bologna
Roma v Brescia
Reggina v Como
Chievo v Inter
Parma v Juventus
Milan v Lazio
Torino v Modena
Empoli v Perugia
Atalanta v Udinese

Udinese 2 - 1 Piacenza, Juventus 1 - 0 Empoli, Brescia 0 - 0 Chievo, Como 2 - 2 Parma, Inter Milan 3 - 0 Reggina, Lazio 1 - 1 Torino, Modena 1 - 1 AS Roma, Perugia 1 - 0 AC Milan, Bologna 2 - 3 Atalanta.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter Milan	20	14	3	3	42	20	45
AC Milan	20	13	3	4	36	14	42
Juventus	20	12	6	2	36	14	42
Lazio	20	10	8	2	35	19	38
Chievo	20	10	4	6	29	19	34
Udinese	20	9	5	6	21	20	32
Parma	20	8	7	5	35	24	31
Bologna	20	7	7	6	24	22	28
Perugia	20	8	4	8	25	27	28
Roma	20	7	6	7	32	29	27
Brescia	20	5	8	7	24	28	23
Empoli	20	6	5	9	24	28	23
Atalanta	20	5	6	9	23	32	21
Modena	20	6	3	11	14	29	21
Reggina	20	5	4	11	18	36	19
Piacenza	20	3	4	13	16	34	13
Como	20	1	9	10	13	29	12
Torino	20	2	6	12	12	35	12



ENGLISH



Arsenal failed to take advantage of Manchester United's derby-day draw as the Premiership champions were held 1-1 at Newcastle.

The Gunners were also unable to capitalise on Laurent Robert's second-half sending off, after his earlier equaliser had cancelled out Thierry Henry's 24th goal of the season.

Henry opened the scoring on 35 minutes with a trademark finish, speeding clear of his marker to get on the end of Sylvain Wiltord's pass, before dancing around Shay Given and converting into an open goal.

Newcastle always looked a threat when on the attack, with Alan Shearer coming closes for them as he reached a low cross first and saw his first-time shot clawed away by David Seaman.

And they pulled level eight minutes after the interval, when Robert skipped past two Arsenal challenges before curling a measured shot past Seaman from 20 yards.

However, his good work was immediately undone when receiving two yellow cards in the space of two minutes soon after.

Shaun Goater snatched a 1-1 draw for City against United in the Manchester derby at Old Trafford on Sunday as Kevin Keegan's inspired late substitution robbed the Red Devils of derby-day revenge.

Trailing to Ruud van Nistelrooy's first-half opener and with neither Robbie Fowler nor Nicolas Anelka making

much of an impact, Keegan threw on Goater and Ali Benarbia for the final frenzied five minutes.

The outcome was devastating. With his first touch Benarbia delivered an astute free-kick which Shaun Wright-Phillips chipped into the box where Goater, scorer of two in City's 3-1 triumph over the same opposition in November, steered his header past Roy Carroll.

Andy Johnson rescued a vital point for West Brom with a last-gasp equaliser to draw 1-1 with Bolton at The Hawthorns.

Henrik Pedersen opened the scoring after Youri Djorkaeff's initial effort had been saved by West Brom goalkeeper Russell Hout.

Bolton clung on to that advantage until the last minute when Johnson pounced to deny Bolton the chance to move seven points clear of the relegation zone.

Other results went Bolton's way to make the late leveller even harder to swallow for boss Sam Allardyce.

Sunderland stay rooted to the bottom of the Premiership after a 4-1 defeat at Tottenham.



Gary Doherty of Tottenham Hotspur scores their second goal during the FA Barclaycard Premiership match between Tottenham Hotspur and Sunderland at White Hart Lane.

Howard Wilkinson's strugglers suffered a blow in the early stages at White Hart Lane with Gustavo Poyet netting for Tottenham after 14 minutes.

Kevin Phillips levelled matters after 26 minutes to give Sunderland hope before Gary Doherty put Spurs ahead again on the stroke of half-time.

Simon Davies put the game beyond Sunderland after 67 minutes and Teddy Sheringham scored his 300th career goal to put the icing on the cake in the final minutes.

Lee Bowyer's return to Elland Road with new club West Ham was overshadowed once the game got underway by Seth Johnson, who scored his first goal of the season to give Leeds a 1-0 win.

Johnson featured prominently again in the second half when he was struck by Frederic Kanoute to earn the Frenchman a red card.

David Thompson scored the only goal of the game after 26 minutes as Blackburn ended their eight-match win-less run against Southampton at Ewood Park.

Aston Villa made a superb start at Loftus Road with Gareth Barry scoring his third goal in as many games but Steed Malbranque levelled

soon after from the penalty spot for Fulham.

The goals continued to flow in the first half and Jon Harley lashed in a fine effort but both defences tightened up in the second period as Fulham clung on to a 2-1 win.

Chelsea's challenge for a Champions League place continues after a 3-1 victory over Birmingham.

Gianfranco Zola broke the deadlock at St Andrews just before half-time before Eidur Gudjohnsen doubled the advantage early in the second half and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink netted a third from the penalty spot. Robbie Savage scored for City with a penalty.

In an early kick-off at Anfield, Liverpool needed a second-half John Arne Riise goal to rescue a 1-1 draw against Middlesbrough, who had taken the lead after 38 minutes through a floated Geremi free-kick.

Kevin Lisbie dealt a blow to Everton's hopes of European qualification with a goal in the dying seconds to clinch a 2-1 win for Charlton at The Valley after Brian McBride had cancelled out Radostin Kishishev's opener.

FIXTURES

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY, 2003

Bolton Wanderers v Man Utd
 Everton v Southampton
 Charlton Athletic v Aston Villa
 Chelsea v Blackburn Rovers
 Leeds United v Newcastle United
 Man City v Arsenal
 Sunderland v Middlesbrough

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY, 2003

West Bromwich Albion v West Ham Utd
 Birmingham City v Liverpool

MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY, 2003

Tottenham Hotspur v Fulham

PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal 2 - 1 Fulham, Bolton W. 4 - 2 Birmingham C., Chelsea 1 - 1 Tottenham H., Everton 2 - 0 Leeds U., Manchester C. 1 - 2 West Bromwich A., Postp. Middlesbrough ? - ? Newcastle U., Southampton 0 - 2 Manchester U., Sunderland 1 - 3 Charlton Athletic, West Ham U. 0 - 3 Liverpool, Aston-Villa 3 - 0 Blackburn R.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	27	17	6	4	57	29	57
Man Utd	27	16	6	5	44	25	54
Newcastle	26	15	4	7	42	32	49
Chelsea	27	13	9	5	48	27	48
Everton	27	13	6	8	35	32	45
Liverpool	27	11	10	6	38	26	43
Tottenham	27	12	6	9	40	37	42
Charlton	27	12	6	9	36	34	42
Southampton	27	10	9	8	28	26	39
Man City	27	11	5	11	38	38	38
Blackburn	27	9	10	8	32	31	37
Aston Villa	27	10	5	12	31	29	35
Leeds	27	10	4	13	34	34	34
Middlesbrough	26	8	7	11	30	30	31
Fulham	26	8	6	12	28	34	30
Birmingham	27	6	8	13	23	40	26
Bolton	27	5	10	12	30	44	25
West Brom	26	5	6	15	20	38	21
West Ham	27	4	8	15	28	52	20
Sunderland	27	4	7	16	18	42	19

FIRST DIVISION

Brighton & Hove A. 4 - 1 Wolverhampton W., Coventry C. 0 - 1 Burnley, Grimsby T. 2 - 0 Stoke C., Ipswich T. 3 - 2 Sheffield U., Portsmouth 6 - 2 Derby County, Preston North End 2 - 1 Millwall, Sheffield W. 2 - 2 Norwich C., Walsall 1 - 4 Leicester C., Watford 1 - 2 Rotherham U., Wimbledon 2 - 2 Bradford C., Nottingham F. 2 - 1 Crystal Palace.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portsmouth	31	19	9	3	65	31	66
Leicester	31	19	7	5	51	29	64
Sheff Utd	29	15	7	7	44	30	52
Nottm Forest	31	14	9	8	49	32	51
Norwich	30	12	10	8	43	30	46
Reading	29	14	4	11	34	29	46
Wolverhampton	30	12	9	9	50	34	45
Watford	31	13	6	12	37	47	45
Ipswich	30	12	8	10	47	38	44
Rotherham	31	12	8	11	50	43	44
Coventry	31	11	10	10	36	34	43
Millwall	31	12	7	12	39	45	43
Crystal Palace	30	10	12	8	43	33	42
Derby	31	12	5	14	40	45	41
Burnley	30	11	8	11	44	55	41
Wimbledon	30	10	9	11	50	50	39
Gillingham	28	10	9	9	36	39	39
Preston	31	9	11	11	47	50	38
Bradford	30	9	8	13	37	51	35
Walsall	31	9	6	16	42	50	33
Grimsby	31	7	7	17	36	59	28
Stoke	31	5	10	16	34	56	25
Sheff Wed	31	5	9	17	29	54	24
Brighton	31	5	8	18	32	51	23

SECOND DIVISION

Brentford 1 - 2 Crewe Alexandra, Bristol C. 1 - 2 Colchester U., Cardiff C. 1 - 1 Barnsley, Cheltenham 0 - 2 Stockport County, Chesterfield 0 - 0 Peterborough U., Mansfield T. 3 - 2 Notts County, Northampton T. 1 - 1 Queens Park R., Oldham Athletic 0 - 1 Plymouth Argyle, Port Vale 1 - 2 Luton T., Tranmere R. 0 - 1 Swindon T., Wigan Athletic 1 - 1 Blackpool, Wycombe W. 0 - 0 Huddersfield T.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wigan	31	21	7	3	50	19	70
Crewe	31	18	7	6	55	28	61
Cardiff	30	17	7	6	47	25	58
Oldham	31	15	10	6	46	27	55
Bristol City	30	15	7	8	54	34	52
QPR	31	14	8	9	42	35	50
Luton	29	13	8	8	44	37	47
Plymouth	30	12	9	9	40	34	45
Blackpool	30	12	9	9	39	38	45
Tranmere	31	13	6	12	41	46	45
Swindon	31	11	9	11	42	43	42
Wycombe	31	10	9	12	43	40	39
Chesterfield	30	11	6	13	26	36	39
Brentford	28	10	8	10	33	32	38
Stockport	31	9	6	16	42	51	33
Peterborough	31	7	11	13	31	39	32
Mansfield	31	9	5	17	48	66	32
Notts County	31	6	13	12	45	52	31
Port Vale	29	8	7	14	32	43	31
Colchester	30	7	10	13	31	43	31
Northampton	31	8	7	16	28	48	31
Barnsley	30	7	9	14	33	46	30
Huddersfield	30	7	8	15	21	35	29
Cheltenham	30	6	10	14	27	43	28



Lauren Robert: Scored in Newcastle's draw with Arsenal.

WORLD

Spanish Primera Liga

Real Sociedad's inconsistency continued on Sunday afternoon as they were held to a goalless draw by lowly Espanyol.

The league leaders have been under constant pressure from an in-form Real Madrid side finally showing their title credentials and Raynald Denoueix's men had the perfect opportunity to re-establish a four-point lead at the top.

But Darko Kovacevic and Tayfur Korkmaz both squandered chances for the hosts and the visitors will be happy with a point gained.

Fellow championship hopefuls Valencia needed an 85th-minute equaliser to earn a 1-1 draw at basement club Recreativo Huelva.

Raul Molina gave the hosts a surprise lead in the 32nd minute as the defending champions struggled to find their feet.

But Aurelio found the target with a sweetly-struck free-kick to keep third-placed Valencia five points behind the leaders.

Celta Vigo boosted their Champions League

qualification hopes with a 2-0 victory against Mallorca.

Mallorca looked lively until Edu struck in the 55th and 64th minutes to end the visitors' brave challenge.

Deportivo La Coruna fought back from a goal down to earn a 1-1 home draw against Osasuna.

Inaki Munoz silenced the home crowd when he found the target a minute after the restart, but Dutch striker Roy Makaay earned his side a share of the

spoils in the 65th minute.

Rayo Vallecano claimed a 2-1 victory over Malaga to help their battle to avoid the drop.

Miguel Angel Michel opened the scoring for Malaga early in the game and Roberto Peragon appeared to have given the hosts the win when he struck in the 80th minute.

But Uruguayan international Dario Silva pulled one back five minutes later to create a tense finale for Rayo.

Racing Santander eased their relegation worries with a 2-0 victory over mid-table Alaves.

Mehdi Nafti fired the hosts ahead in the 25th minute before Mario Regueiro sealed the points three minutes from time.

On Saturday, Real Madrid rediscovered their winning touch as they brushed aside the challenge of fellow title contenders Real Betis in the Bernabeu.

After three consecutive Primera Liga draws a four goal haul against the side placed fifth in the league restored the momentum to Madrid's title challenge.

Goals from Raul, Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo crushed a spirited Real Betis who had more than matched the home side in the first half, and taken the lead through Fernando.

In the day's only other game in La Liga, Villarreal achieved back-to-back wins with a victory over mid-table rivals Valladolid.

Valladolid slipped below their conquerors in the table, paying the full price for Jorge Lopez's 23rd-minute penalty strike.

But then the decisive moments came, as Valladolid goalkeeper Albano Bizzarri brought Martin Palermo down in the penalty area as he was

Villarreal 1 - 0 Valladolid, Real Madrid 4 - 1 Real Betis, Deportivo La Coruna 1 - 1 Osasuna, Mallorca 0 - 2 Celta de Vigo, Racing Santander 2 - 0 Deportivo Alaves, Rayo Vallecano 2 - 1 Malaga, Real Sociedad 0 - 0 Espanyol, Recreativo Huelva 1 - 1 Valencia, Sevilla 1 - 1 Atletico Madrid, Barcelona 2 - 2 Athletic Bilbao.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Sociedad	21	12	8	1	36	24	44
Real Madrid	21	11	9	1	46	22	42
Valencia	21	11	6	4	34	17	39
D Coruna	21	10	6	5	30	25	36
Real Betis	21	9	6	6	32	28	33
Celta Vigo	21	10	3	8	24	19	33
Atletico Madrid	21	7	8	6	33	27	29
Villarreal	21	7	7	7	22	23	28
Malaga	21	6	9	6	28	26	27
Mallorca	21	8	3	10	24	35	27
Valladolid	21	8	3	10	21	24	27
Sevilla	21	6	8	7	17	16	26
Athletic Bilbao	21	7	5	9	32	37	26
CD Alaves	21	6	7	8	26	33	25
Barcelona	21	6	6	9	29	30	24
Osasuna	21	6	6	9	23	27	24
Racing Santander	21	7	2	12	24	29	23
Espanyol	21	6	4	11	24	31	22
Rayo Vallecano	21	6	4	11	22	30	22
Recreativo Huelva	21	3	6	12	17	41	15



Raul scored Real Madrid's equaliser in their 4-1 win over Real Betis.

SPANISH FIXTURES SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2003

Barcelona v Athletic
Deportivo v Osasuna
Mallorca v Celta
R.Vallecano v Malaga
R.Sociedad v Espanyol
Sevilla v At.Madrid
Villarreal v Valladolid
Rec de Huelva v Valencia
Racing v Alaves
R.Madrid v Betis

German Bundesliga

Bayern Munich's seemingly unstoppable charge towards the Bundesliga title faltered slightly as they conceded a last minute equaliser to Hamburg on Sunday.

Claudio Pizarro's 11th-minute goal put Bayern ahead and as time ticked away the Bavarian giants looked likely to open up a 10-point lead over Borussia Dortmund, who lost 1-0 to Stuttgart.

But Japanese star Naohiro Takahara levelled for Hamburg in the 90th minute to ensure Bayern's lead was extended to just eight points - still a formidable safety margin for Ottmar Hitzfeld's team.

Second-placed Borussia Dortmund lost 1-0 to Stuttgart in the day's other game.

The reigning champions went behind in the 75th minute to a Zvonimir Soldo effort and, with defeat looming, they had Brazilian striker Marcio Amoroso sent off for his second bookable offence in the last minute.

Bayer Leverkusen suffered another torrid setback on

Saturday to put the position of coach Klaus Toppmoller under serious threat.

They were beaten 2-1 at Bochum and consequently are now just three points off the foot of the Bundesliga.

Toppmoller was one of the darlings of German football just a season ago but yet another league defeat - Leverkusen's 10th in 20 matches this season - has left the coach on very thin ice.

Leverkusen, who finished runners-up in the Bundesliga, the German cup and the Champions League last year, have endured an almighty struggle in this campaign. They crashed to defeat at Bochum with substitute Vahid Hashemian of Iran scoring the winner, his second



VfL Bochum's goalkeeper Rein van Duijnhoven under pressure from Diego Placente of Bayer Leverkusen.

goal of the game, six minutes from time.

Marko Babic had scored a 78th-minute equaliser for Leverkusen, who are fourth from bottom - just one point above the drop zone - but they could not hang on for a point.

Nearer the top of the Bundesliga, Werder Bremen missed the chance to move into second place following a 2-1 home defeat by improving 1860 Munich.

Daniel Borimirov's second goal of the season eight minutes from time completed 1860's fightback after Benjamin Lauth had earlier equalised Ivan Klasnic's first-half goal.

Hertha Berlin dealt a blow to Schalke's hopes of a Champions League place by inflicting their first defeat in seven games with a 4-2 home success.

It was a wretched afternoon for Schalke midfielder Gustavo Varela, who scored Hertha's third before being sent off in the 60th minute for his second bookable offence.

Michael Preetz, Alex Alves and Marcelinho were the home side's other scorers, while Emile Mpenza and Nils Oude Kamphuis scored at the right end for Schalke.

Kaiserslautern admit that their Bundesliga survival depends on home form and they took the first tentative steps towards safety with a 2-0 home win against Borussia Monchengladbach.

Goals from Aleksander Knavs and Miroslav Klose gave Eric Gerets' team their first victory of the year and will instil some belief that they can avoid relegation.

Wolfsburg eased the pressure on their manager Wolfgang Wolf by also claiming a 2-0 win over Arminia Bielefeld. Goals by Stefan Schnoor in the 25th minute and Tomislav Maric six minutes after half-time sent the home fans away happy.

Mohammadou Idrissou did his bit to ease Hannover's relegation worries by putting a hat-trick past their fellow strugglers Nurnberg.

Idrissou stunned the visitors by firing his side three up by the 24th minute.

Carlos Junior hit back for Nurnberg in the 32nd minute and Sasa Ciric added a second in the 53rd minute before he was sent off for foul and abusive language.

Danijel Stefanovic added a fourth to seal Hannover's victory in the 71st minute.

Finally, Hansa Rostock had striker Rade Prica sent off in the closing minutes as they were held to a goalless draw by basement club Energie Cottbus.

Bochum 2 - 1 Bayer Leverkusen, Hannover 4 - 2 Nurnberg, Hansa Rostock 0 - 0 Energie Cottbus, Hertha BSC 4 - 2 Schalke, Kaiserslautern 2 - 0 Monchengladbach, Werder Bremen 1 - 2 Munich 1860, Wolfsburg 2 - 0 Arminia Bielefeld, Bayern Munich 1 - 1 Hamburger SV, Stuttgart 1 - 0 Borussia Dortmund.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	20	13	5	2	40	15	44
Borussia Dortmund	20	10	6	4	31	16	36
VfB Stuttgart	20	10	6	4	33	24	36
Werder Bremen	20	10	4	6	37	32	34
Schalke	20	8	8	4	27	21	32
1860 Munich	20	9	4	7	31	27	31
Hamburg	20	8	6	6	25	26	30
VfL Bochum	20	8	5	7	36	32	29
Hertha Berlin	20	8	5	7	26	25	29
Wolfsburg	19	8	2	9	23	24	26
Hansa Rostock	20	6	6	8	22	24	24
Arminia Bielefeld	20	6	6	8	23	28	24
Hannover 96	20	6	5	9	29	37	23
Nurnberg	20	6	3	11	26	34	21
Bayer Leverkusen	20	5	5	10	25	34	20
Borussia M'gladbach	19	5	4	10	20	24	19
FC Kaiserslautern	20	4	5	11	22	32	17
Cottbus	20	4	5	11	18	39	17

FIXTURES Sunday 16, February 2003

M'gladbach v Hertha
Hamburger SV v Wolfsburg
1860 München v B.München
Nurnberg v Werder Bremen
Cottbus v Hannover
Leverkusen v Hansa Rostock
Dortmund v Bochum
Schalke v Stuttgart
Bielefeld v Kaiserslautern



Ethniki Katigoria

Panathinaikos kept hold of top spot in Greece with a 2-1 victory in the Athens derby against AEK on Sunday afternoon. Pana, now unbeaten in 15 league games, took the lead through Nikos Liberopoulos in the 33rd minute, but Christis Maladenis levelled the scores with a 25-yard drive four minutes later.

Angelos Bassinas gave the hosts all three points from the penalty spot after 71 minutes following Nikolaos Georgeas' foul on Joonas Kolkka.

Second-placed Olympiakos kept the pressure on Pana though by beating Iraklis 2-1, with new coach Oleg Protasov making a winning start.

Predrag Djordjevic fired Olympiakos ahead in the 37th minute before Ederson Fofonka equalised after 57 minutes.

But Labros Chutos headed Djordjevic's penetrating cross home eight minutes from time to make it a happy day for Protasov.

Third-placed PAOK Salonika are also on the running for the championship and they claimed a 2-1 victory at Kallithea.

Theofanis Gekas and Giannakis Okkas were on the scoresheet for the visitors, with Pantelis Kafes scoring for the hosts in between.

Panionios are up to fourth after their hard-fought 2-0 victory against Panachaiki Patras.

Ermin Siljak put them ahead on the stroke of half-time and Erol Bulut doubled the advantage with a sweetly-struck free-kick after 56 minutes.

Njugo Nyren-Demba bagged a brace as Aris beat Aegaleo 2-1, Kostas Paputis grabbed a consolation goal from the penalty spot, while goals from Methodi Seyanov and Alessandro Soares gave OFI Crete a 2-0 win over lowly Akraitos in the day's other games.

Xanthi got their bid for a UEFA Cup place **Angelos Basinas: Featured in Pao's back on track on victory over city rivals AEK Athens.** Saturday with a narrow 1-0 home win against Proodeftiki.

Thanassis Prittas scored the only goal of the game eight minutes from time to give the northern Greek club all three points.

The win sees Xanthi move up to sixth place in the table, while Proodeftiki lie 10th.

Ionikos recorded only their third win of the campaign with a 2-0 home success against fellow strugglers Giannina.

Dimitris Markomichalis opened the scoring after 15 minutes and added the second with just five minutes left on the clock.

Dutch Eredivisie

PSV Eindhoven's title hopes received a boost as Ajax were held to a 1-1 draw by Feyenoord on Sunday afternoon. Victory for Ronald Koeman's second-placed side would have left them two points behind the leaders and things started brightly when Swedish forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic found the target from close range in the 28th minute.

But Feyenoord, now 11 points off the pace, levelled when Robin van Persie pounced on a rebound just before half-time to keep their slim championship dream alive. Elsewhere on Sunday Foeke Booy's Utrecht came from behind twice to earn a 2-2 draw against a battling Excelsior side.

Patrick Mtigla fired Excelsior into the lead in the 21st minute but Paulus Roiha levelled matters after 54 minutes. Rene van Dieren restored Excelsior's advantage in the 65th minute, but Dirk Kuijt popped up with the equaliser seven minutes later to give his side a share of the spoils.

NEC Nijmegen maintained their fine run of form to move level on points with their opponents NAC Breda with a hard-fought 2-0 victory.

Mike Zonneveld found the target immediately after half-time before Frank Demouge made the points safe after 69 minutes.

Finally, lowly Groningen ended their three-game losing streak by holding Twente Enschede to a goalless draw.

Twente looked the livelier of the two sides in a tepid encounter with Chris de Witte and Thijs Houwing hitting the woodwork in the first half.

PSV Eindhoven march towards the Eredivisie title continued on Saturday after Arjen Robben's 40th-minute strike gave Guus Hiddink's men all three points at RKC Waalwijk. Robben's goal exacted revenge a measure of revenge for PSV, whose 2-1 defeat at the Mandemakers Stadion last season contributed to their failed attempt to win the championship. But they made no mistake this time and the result continued Hiddink's side's confident start to the second part of the league season following their 3-0 win over RBC last weekend.

Roda edged into fourth spot after bouncing back from their midweek cup defeat to Ajax with an excellent 2-0 win over Vitesse Arnhem.

Boss Wiljan Vloet had bemoaned his players following that 1-0 defeat in Amsterdam and they responded against their struggling opponents.

Yannis Anastasiou opened the scoring after six minutes and Fatih Sonkaya secured the points 11 minutes from time.

Robert Maaskant made a winning start to his term as coach at RBC Roosendaal as Henk Vos's first-half penalty gave them a narrow win over bottom club De Graafschap. Maaskant's appointment as coach this week put an end to the turmoil at the club since the sacking of Chris Dekker on January 28.

And he immediately ended a run of three successive defeats, Vos' spot-kick three minutes before the interval secured the points - condemning De Graafschap to their first-ever Eredivisie defeat at the hands of RBC.

Vos' afternoon was spoiled however when he was sent off for violent conduct nine minutes into the second half.

Heerenveen's hopes for European football were given a boost with a comprehensive 5-0 win over AZ Alkmaar. John De Jong got Foppe de Haan's side off to a superb start with two goals in the first eight minutes and Johan Hansma made it three from the spot just before the interval.

Ronnie Venema added a fourth after 62 minutes and Georgios Samaras a fifth two minutes from time to extend the hosts' unbeaten run to six games.

On Friday night Willem II put their 6-0 humiliation by Ajax last weekend behind them in style by hammering Zwolle 3-0.

Northern Ireland striker James Quinn got off the mark quickly following his return from suspension, scoring for the visitors after 13 minutes.

Cedric van der Gun struck a second right before half-time and Jattoo Ceesay made it three in the 78th minute.

FC Zwolle 0 - 3 Willem II Tilburg, RBC Roosendaal 1 - 0 De Graafschap, RKC Waalwijk 0 - 1 PSV Eindhoven, Roda Kerkrade 2 - 0 Vitesse Arnhem, SC Heerenveen 5 - 0 AZ Alkmaar, Ajax Amsterdam 1 - 1 Feyenoord Rotterdam, FC Groningen 0 - 0 FC Twente Enschede, FC Utrecht 2 - 2 Excelsior Rotterdam, NEC Nijmegen 2 - 0 NAC Breda.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	19	15	3	1	46	10	48
Ajax	19	13	5	1	51	19	44
Feyenoord	19	11	4	4	45	23	37
Roda JC	18	8	5	5	32	25	29
Willem II	19	8	4	7	29	29	28
RKC	19	8	4	7	19	24	28
NAC	18	6	9	3	23	15	27
NEC	19	7	6	6	24	26	27
FC Utrecht	18	6	7	5	25	23	25
Heerenveen	19	6	6	7	30	30	24
FC Twente	19	5	8	6	23	28	23
AZ	18	6	3	9	27	45	21
Excelsior	18	4	7	7	22	31	19
RBC	19	5	4	10	21	32	19
Vitesse	18	4	4	10	17	22	16
FC Groningen	19	3	5	11	16	29	14
FC Zwolle	18	3	4	11	16	33	13
De Graafschap	18	3	4	11	18	40	13

Belgian Eersteklasse

Club Brugge continued their seemingly unstoppable march to the Jupiler League title on Saturday with a 8-0 away hammering of basement club Meffelen.

Brugge have been in astonishing form this season and won their 18th match out of 20 played so far with alarming ease to maintain a 14-point lead over Lierse at the summit.

Belgium striker Sandy Martens netted a hat-trick, including the opener on 24 minutes which he volleyed home after a Philippe Clement pass.

The goal sparked a scoring spree with Gurt Verheyen making it 2-0 just two minutes later with a simple tap-in and Olivier de Cock adding a third with just three more minutes elapsed.

Verheyen netted his second of the match after 32 minutes to make it 4-0 but the first half scoring was not finished yet.

Timmy Simons slotted home from the penalty spot on the 37 minute mark and Martens hit his second two minutes before the break.

Martens completed his treble just after the hour mark and Tim Smolders capped the scoring three minutes from time.

Lierse leapfrogged Anderlecht and Sint-Truiden into second spot after claiming a 2-1 away win at Westerlo.

Wim Mennes gave the hosts the lead after 40 minutes but Aruna Kone levelled three minutes later for Lierse.

Bjorn de Wilde then netted the winner for the visitors a minute from time.

Elsewhere, La Louviere went down to a 4-2 home defeat against high-flying Lokeren, who move up to third as a result, while Antwerp beat Charleroi 3-1.

Anderlecht moved up to second place with a fine 2-0 victory at AA Gent on Sunday afternoon.

Captain Glen De Boeck put the Brussels club ahead in the sixth minute when he headed Besnik Hasi's cross into the back of the net.

And Martin Mornar pounced in the 67th minute to secure all three points for the visitors.

Sint-Truiden missed the chance to move into second place after a surprising 2-1 defeat at lowly Beveren.

Desire Mbonabucya got his head to Danny Boffin's free-kick to give Sint-Truiden the lead just before half-time.

But Venance Zezeto levelled the scores in the 58th minute before skipper Davy Theunis headed home the 75th-minute winner.

Lommel gave their survival hopes a massive boost with a 2-1 home victory over Germinal Beerschot.

Paul Kpaka put the visitors ahead with a 40th-minute penalty after Michel Noben pushed Kwame Quansah in the area.

However, Daniel Scavone equalised with a long-range drive five minutes after the restart and Noben pounced on some uncertain defending to give Lommel all three points six minutes from time.

The visitors suffered further misery in the 86th minute when Kpaka saw red.

Finally, in-form Standard-Liege were held to a goalless draw by Mons.

Racing Genk 5 - 4 Mouscron, Antwerp 3 - 1 Charleroi, La Louviere 2 - 4 Lokeren, Mechelen 0 - 8 Club Brugge, Westerlo 1 - 2 Lierse, Beveren 2 - 1 Sint-Truiden, Lommel 2 - 1 Germinal Beerschot, Standard Liege 0 - 0 Mons-Bergen.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Club Brugge	20	18	1	1	66	16	55
Anderlecht	20	13	2	5	45	24	41
Lierse	20	12	5	3	35	19	41
Lokeren	20	12	4	4	42	29	40
St-Truidense	20	11	5	4	50	28	38
Genk	20	10	5	5	47	34	35
Standard Liege	20	8	6	6	33	25	30
Mons	20	9	3	8	31	25	30
Gent	19	8	2	9	31	31	26
Excelsior Mouscron	20	7	5	8	35	39	26
Antwerp	20	7	4	9	30	37	25
Westerlo	20	7	1	12	18	34	22
La Louviere	20	5	5	10	22	28	20
Beveren	20	6	2	12	24	49	20
Germinal	20	5	3	12	33	40	18
Lommel	20	4	3	13	18	36	15
Charleroi	20	2	6	12	21	47	12
KV Mechelen	20	2	4	14	15	56	10



French Ligue 1

Marseille threw down the gauntlet to Monaco and the rest with a 2-0 away win at struggling Ajaccio in the latest leg of the absorbing race for the French title.

The south coast giants moved two points clear of Monaco at the summit after Didier Deschamps' men could only manage a goalless draw at Rennes. Ibrahima Bakayoko's 35th-minute strike and a penalty from Lamine Sakho in the 79th minute gave them all the points.

Bakayoko's goal was an excellent finish. Johnny Ecker chipped an intelligent free-kick into the mass of players behind the Ajaccio wall, Frank Leboeuf headed it goalward and Bakayoko scored with an acrobatic scissor kick. The second goal came when Sakho converted a penalty given for a foul on Jerome Perez. Rennes punched above their weight to knock Monaco out of their title-chasing stride. The home side improved their record of four defeats in five games with the stalemate at the Route de Lorient. Monaco may have missed out on a fourth straight win, but at least they stretched their unbeaten run to 11 matches.

Nice remain third after being held 2-2 by Sochaux in a match in which they were reduced to 10 men. Sochaux grabbed a point with a late penalty. Pierre-Alain Frau, who 11 minutes from time was halted in the box by goalkeeper Damien Gregorini, stepped up and converted the spot-kick he earned to give the visitors a share of the spoils.

The hosts had fallen behind to Mickael Pagis' 39th minute opener on a quick counter attack and then had Jose Cobos sent off after 44 minutes.

Despite the numerical disadvantage, Nice took a 2-1 lead through strikes from Ferreira Everson and Cedric Mionnet, but were thwarted by Frau's spot-kick. Paris St Germain's title aspirations took a severe dent as they followed up their beating in Bastia with a 3-1 home mauling by Montpellier. The capital club's embarrassment at going down to Gerard Bernardet's relegation candidates in front of their own fans will have been heightened by the fact that they were ahead after just three minutes when Jerome Leroy scored.

But it was all downhill from there as Montpellier fought back with two goals from Valery Mezague and one from Fode Mansare. Both sides finished with 10 men after Mezague and Paulo Cesar were sent off.

As PSG's demise at the stade Armand-Cesari-Furiani last week proved, Fortress Bastia is one of the most difficult places in France to pick up points. The Corsicans are now starting to show they can be every bit as good away from home. Bastia followed up their recent road win at rejuvenated Rennes, and hard-fought draw in the Corsican derby at Ajaccio with a convincing 2-0 triumph at Bordeaux.

Michael Essien's 21st minute strike put them on their way and former Bordeaux striker Lilian Laslandes, who is at Bastia on loan from English Premiership side Sunderland, doubled the lead in the 53rd minute.

The visitors, struggling in the lower reaches of the league earlier in the season, climbed to seventh in France with the win and are now level on points with Bordeaux, who are sixth.

Strasbourg ended their run of three consecutive defeats with a home victory over Guingamp, who tumbled to their sixth consecutive reverse.

Strasbourg stunned the visitors with three goals in the space of five minutes, Pascal Camadini, Danijel Ljuboja and Corentin Martins all hitting the target. Stephane Carnot's 71st-minute reply will have done little to lighten Guingamp coach Bertrand Marchand's mood.

Troyes remain rooted to the bottom of the table despite claiming a point at reigning champions Lyon thanks to a goalless draw.

The result leaves title-chasing Lyon in fifth place, six points behind Marseille. In the other two games played, Le Havre boosted their fight against relegation with a 2-1 home win over fellow strugglers Sedan, while Lens recorded a 2-0 away win at Lille, who have been dragged into the relegation dogfight.

At the bottom Le Havre prevailed 2-1 in a game against nine-man Sedan which could prove extremely costly by the end of the season for the visitors, who now find themselves third bottom in France. Le Havre took a 34th-minute lead when midfielder David Martot headed in Jean-Michel Lesage's left wing cross.

Sedan, wanting to play more direct football, equalised seconds before half-time through Camara. Lesage restored the advantage in the 74th minute when he picked up Guillaume Beuzelin's cross, glided between two defenders and shot home. Sedan's Eddy Capron was sent off for a foul in the 80th minute, and Richard Jezierski was sent off for a second bookable offence a minute later in the penalty box.

Ajaccio 0 - 2 Marseille, Bordeaux 0 - 2 Bastia, Le Havre 2 - 1 Sedan, Lille 0 - 2 Lens, Lyon 0 - 0 Troyes, Nice 2 - 2 Sochaux, Paris S.G. 1 - 3 Montpellier, Rennes 0 - 0 Monaco, Strasbourg 3 - 1 Guingamp, Auxerre 0 - 1 Nantes.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marseille	27	14	6	7	30	23	48
Monaco	27	12	10	5	40	21	46
Nice	27	11	10	6	31	21	43
Auxerre	26	12	7	7	26	21	43
Lyon	27	11	9	7	43	32	42
Bordeaux	26	11	7	8	37	28	40
Bastia	26	12	4	10	29	28	40
PSG	27	10	9	8	33	25	39
Sochaux	25	10	8	7	27	22	38
Nantes	25	11	5	9	29	27	38
Lens	25	9	10	6	30	25	37
Guingamp	26	10	4	12	36	38	34
Strasbourg	26	9	7	10	30	37	34
Le Havre	27	8	8	11	21	30	32
Rennes	27	7	7	13	22	29	28
Lille	24	7	7	10	20	30	28
AC Ajaccio	26	6	9	11	20	31	27
Sedan	26	7	6	13	28	42	27
Montpellier	26	5	9	12	24	35	24
Troyes	26	4	8	14	15	26	20

Scottish League

Rangers stayed top of the SPL after scoring a 3-1 win at Dunfermline. Rangers went ahead in the 37th minute in extraordinary circumstances when Neil McCann scored from out on the right touchline.

The winger swung the ball into the box and Derek Stillie, who was being challenged by Shota Arveladze, could not prevent it from sailing over him and into the net.

But four minutes into the second half Rangers saw their lead wiped out as Craig Brewster blasted into the back of the net after Stefan Klos had come out to block Noel Hunt's shot.

Rangers were stung into action and their pressure paid off when defender Lorenzo Amoroso netted with 19 minutes left.

And the leaders secured the points when Claudio Caniggia netted in the final minute.

Celtic get the chance to close the gap again when they host Livingston on Sunday.

Second-half goals from Alan Maybury, Mark de Vries and substitute Kevin McKenna gave UEFA Cup-chasing Hearts a well-deserved 3-0 win over 10-man Kilmarnock.

The Tynecastle men dominated almost from the kick-off but the battling visitors had managed to stem the tide until half-time.

However, two goals in quick succession after the break, sandwiched between Greg Shields' sending-off for two yellow cards, put the home side in command and a third goal from McKenna, on for de Vries, simply rubbed salt into Kilmarnock's wounds.

With their emphatic win, the Tynecastle men stretched their lead in third place to seven points over their opponents and now look in a strong position for a UEFA Cup spot.

Partick Thistle collected all three points at Pittodrie after taking advantage of another dismal home display from Aberdeen.

Partick grabbed the only goal of the game when top scorer Alex Burns netted in the 13th minute.

Aberdeen should have equalised when Leon Mike won a penalty in the 34th minute but Phil McGuire's effort was well saved by Kenny Arthur.

And to complete a miserable day for the Dons, Jamie McAllister was sent off with only three minutes to go for being abusive to the referee.

The Dons lacked fluency throughout the 90 minutes and once again left the field to the jeers of their supporters.

Motherwell moved off the bottom after beating Hibernian 2-1.

David Clarkson nodded Motherwell into the lead after half an hour before Shaun Fagan grabbed the second goal.

Garry O'Connor pulled a goal back for the Edinburgh side with 20 minutes remaining but they could not find the goal which would give them a share of the points.

Chris Sutton kept alive Celtic's quadruple dream with a late winner to sink plucky Livingston 2-1 at Parkhead.

But their historic trophy haul suffered a major setback after Henrik Larsson was rushed to hospital with a broken jaw.

"He will be operated on tonight," confirmed Celtic boss Martin O'Neill. "I'm not sure the length of time (he will be out for).

"It looks like he's had a double fracture of the jaw so to win despite that was a fantastic effort."

Celtic closed the gap on their arch-rivals Rangers back to three points after the Light Blues' victory over Dunfermline on Saturday and they had the Englishman and Shaun Maloney to thank.

The youngster was involved in Sutton's winner and Momo Sylla's equaliser after Rolando Zarate had threatened to destroy their SPL title hopes.

But despite the three points, the result was overshadowed by the sight of Larsson leaving the field and with the double-header with Rangers and UEFA Cup clashes against Stuttgart just weeks away it is a major blow to their trophy quest this season.

In the day's other game Dundee United and city neighbours Dundee fought out an entertaining 1-1 SPL draw in their third meeting of the season.

The home side took the lead after 19 minutes in fortunate circumstances when David Mackay and goalkeeper Julian Speroni got mixed up and the young defender headed past his team-mate into the net.

Dundee got back in the game eleven minutes later when Nacho Novo took advantage of a slip from Gary Bolland and knocked a shot past Paul Gallacher from a tight angle.

The second half did not have as much goalmouth action as the first, but the sending off of Charlie Miller after 69 minutes - United's third red card in as many games - along with the debut appearance of Mark Burchill later contributed to an entertaining encounter.

Dunfermline 1 - 3 Rangers, Aberdeen 0 - 1 Partick Thistle, Hearts 3 - 0 Kilmarnock, Motherwell 2 - 1 Hibernian, Celtic 2 - 1 Livingston, Dundee United 1 - 1 FC Dundee.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	27	23	3	1	75	20	72
Celtic	27	22	3	2	69	17	69
Hearts	27	13	7	7	47	41	46
Kilmarnock	27	11	6	10	31	39	39
Dunfermline	26	11	3	12	40	48	36
Hibernian	26	10	4	12	37	40	34
Dundee	26	7	8	11	30	40	29
Partick	27	6	9	12	27	42	27
Livingston	27	7	5	15	35	43	26
Aberdeen	27	5	9	13	22	42	24
Motherwell	26	5	6	15	31	45	21
Dundee Utd	27	4	9	14	23	50	21

FIFA World Ranking

Rank:	Team:	Points:
1.	Brazil	856
2.	France	787
3.	Spain	780
4.	Germany	765
5.	Argentina	750
6.	Netherlands	746
7.	Turkey	736
8.	England	734
9.	Mexico	732
10.	United States	723
11.	Portugal	710
12.	Denmark	707
13.	Italy	705
14.	Ireland Republic	697
15.	Czech Republic	687
16.	Belgium	686
17.	Cameroon	684
18.	Paraguay	679
19.	Yugoslavia	677
20.	Korea Republic	669
21.	Costa Rica	651
22.	Japan	650
22.	Russia	650
24.	Sweden	649
25.	Norway	648
25.	Romania	648
27.	Senegal	647
28.	Uruguay	643
29.	Nigeria	642
30.	South Africa	636
31.	Ecuador	634
32.	Croatia	629
33.	Poland	628
34.	Iran	627
35.	Morocco	623
36.	Slovenia	620
37.	Colombia	617
38.	Saudi Arabia	612
39.	Egypt	596
40.	Honduras	591
41.	Tunisia	586
42.	Bulgaria	582
43.	Finland	580
44.	Switzerland	576
45.	Ukraine	574
46.	Israel	568
47.	Trinidad and Tobago	566
48.	Greece	563
49.	New Zealand	562
50.	Australia	557
51.	Jamaica	555
52.	Iraq	554
52.	Wales	554
54.	Thailand	545
55.	Austria	541
56.	Slovakia	535
57.	Zimbabwe	533
58.	Hungary	532
59.	Ghana	529
60.	Scotland	528

IT'S ALL OUT WAR

Australia v England



Owen v Emerton

Kewell v Beckham



James
v
Schwarzer



James
v
Schwarzer



Lazaridis v Scholes

Hargreaves v Moore

Australia v England

IT'S ALL OUT WAR

Australia v

England

Australia v

England

Australia v

England

Australia v

England